

# MODERN LANGUAGE QUARTERLY

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March, 1959

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# MODERN LANGUAGE QUARTERLY

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## BARTHOLOMEW FAIR AND ITS PUPPETS

By JONAS A. BARISH

The puppet show in *Bartholomew Fair* has attracted attention more perhaps for its coarseness than for its dramatic propriety, with the result that its full significance in the economy of the play has been overlooked.<sup>1</sup> One might suggest, however, that if the Fair is in this play a microcosm of the world, and the puppet show, in its turn, a microcosm of the Fair, then the squalid bickering of the puppets, their pettiness and emptiness, merely reproduce in concentrated form the same qualities distributed among the live inhabitants of Smithfield, and in the world at large. In addition, of course, the puppet show serves as an instrument of correction, analogous to the court of Cynthia in *Cynthia's Revels* or the court of Augustus in *Poetaster*, though it prescribes a drastically different moral. Instead of correcting folly pure and simple, it exposes the folly of trying to correct folly, and thus, in a sense, forms a criticism of Jonson's own earlier comedy.

The inhumanity of the puppets, their unabashed corporeality, and the grossness of their language evolve climactically out of the insistent emphasis on the physical throughout the play. If by "human" one means "reasonable," then the "live" inhabitants of Smithfield are no more human than the wooden puppets. They are viewed persistently under the aspect of matter. For one thing, we know a good deal about their physical appearances—their actual statures, not merely their fashionable clothes or their nervous mannerisms. Ursula, one is scarcely allowed to forget, is monstrously fat and forever sweating. Mooncalf is lean, Goody Trash "a little crooked" in her body, Wasp small, Mrs. Littlewit "little," and Cokes tall and gangling. We have not this kind of information for a single one of the characters of *The Silent Woman*.

Further, the imagery of the human body permeates the language of the play,<sup>2</sup> and this refers not merely to arms and legs, but to the internal organs—kidneys, lungs, heart, blood, and brains—so that the body is anatomized in terms of function. The sense of organic process is everywhere. Ursula not only bulks huge in her fleshly monumentality; she drips, melts, and sweats before our eyes, a visible symbol

<sup>1</sup> When it has not been denied flatly, as in Maurice Castelain, *Ben Jonson* (Paris, 1907), p. 375.

<sup>2</sup> See John J. Enck, *Ben Jonson's Imagery*, MS dissertation (Harvard University, 1950), p. 353, and *passim* in the chapter on *Bartholomew Fair*, a highly effective analysis to which the present discussion is much indebted. Much of the same material, considerably reworked, appears in Enck, *Jonson and the Comic Truth* (Madison, 1957), pp. 189-90.

of the corruptibility of the flesh. The result of this emphasis on physiology, on fermentation and dissolution, is to strip the human organism of transcendental qualities.

The point is strikingly made by a series of tropes which reduce first the brain and then the soul itself to the level of physicality. Wasp imagines the interior of Cokes's head as a kind of idiot wasteland, "hung with cockle-shels, pebbles, fine wheat-strawes, and here and there a chicken's feather, and a cob-web" (I.v.95-97).<sup>3</sup> The primary sense is one of aridity, but the void implies a physical space which might be filled with more substantial matter than it is. When Winwife proposes to visit the Fair, forecasting "excellent creeping sport," Quarlous agrees: "A man that has but a spoone-full of braine, would think so" (I.v.141-43). This answer brings the brain directly into the realm of the palpable: the mind becomes something one might measure with a spoon.

Wasp's later burst of despair at his wayward pupil carries the idea a step farther: "Would I had beene set i' the ground, all but the head on me, and had my braines bowl'd at, or thresh'd out, when first I vnderwent this plague of a charge!" (III.iv.50-52). Here the brain has become an object of sport, a nine-pin, or a vegetable to be harvested from the soil, again something palpable, almost edible, and far from the seat of understanding that philosophy claimed it to be. The final debasement, however, occurs when Edgeworth, commenting scornfully on Cokes's imbecility, degrades the soul itself to the level of matter. "Talke of him to haue a soule? 'heart, if hee haue any more then a thing giuen him in stead of salt, onely to keepe him from stinking, I'le be hang'd afore my time, presently" (IV.ii.54-56). With this view of the soul as a kind of preservative in the blood, placed there to keep the body from putrefaction, the reduction of the spirit to the flesh is complete. Mankind becomes as implacably material as the puppets—more so, in fact, since the puppets cannot decompose.

Equally expressive of the carnality of the play is the persistent appearance of food and drinking in the figurative language, as well as, of course, in the action. Winwife compares Mrs. Littlewit to a garden with "a Strawberry-breath, Chery-lips, Apricot-cheekes, and a soft veluet head, like a *Melicotton*" (I.ii.15-16). In contrast to Truewit's "delicate garden" of femininity in *Epicene* (I.i.105), a pruned and ordered plot of ground blossoming only under careful husbandry, here all of the blossoming plants have fructified: the garden is virtually an orchard. Busy, we learn, quarreled with a grocer over currants; he is described before his first entrance in a posture of gluttony; and there is evident fitness in his having been, before his conversion, a baker who made cakes for folk festivals. The Puritan family as a whole hankers after roast pig. Cokes, for his part, is a "Rauener after fruite" (I.v.117). And Leatherhead's disenchanting recital of the

<sup>3</sup> All quotations from Jonson are from C. H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson, ed., *Ben Jonson* (Oxford, 1925-52).

ingredients in Goody Trash's gingerbread—"stale bread, rotten egges, musty ginger, and dead honey" (II.ii.9-10)—does not alter the fact that the ingredients add up to something edible, and not to a fucus, a magic elixir, or the philosopher's stone.

The word "fruit" forms a juncture between the eating imagery and the procreative imagery of the play. In contrast to *The Silent Woman*, dominated by barrenness and impotence, *Bartholomew Fair* teems with suggestions of sexual fulfillment. This is externalized in Mrs. Littlewit's pregnancy ("her first fruites") which sets much of the plot in motion. Unlike the young heroes of *Epicene*, who are zealous in preventing the marriages of others, Quarlous and Winwife spend the day successfully promoting their own. Winwife's remark, "These flies cannot, this hot season, but engender vs excellent creeping sport" (I.v.140), compresses much of the thematic material of the play into a single image. The notion that nature breeds recklessly during the dog days contains within it the further proposition that fools will spawn their folly more rashly in this season; both activities reach their grand climax on St. Bartholomew's Day. When Winwife and Quarlous choose their words to enter in the madman's book, they speak of "conceiuing" and "creating" those words, giving a carnal twist to purely mental activity. The madman himself, running through the Fair crying his quasi-Biblical injunction, "Quit yee, and multiply yee" (IV.i.112-13), supplies his own demented sanction to the procreative orgy implied by the place and the season.

The accent, throughout, is thus on the gratification of the senses, on physical release, and this release achieves its final expression in the uninhibited debauch of the puppet play. The drinking of sack, the allusions to the eating of herring and bacon in the puppet alehouse, form a link with the perpetual gluttonizing of the Fair. Wasp's excremental abuse reappears in the even nastier abuse of the puppets and their master. And the whoring and pimping that run like a leitmotiv through the day's activities at the Fair reach their unsavory climax in the puppet tavern when Cupid, appearing in his own person, assumes the twin roles of drawer and pander played earlier at Ursula's tent by Captain Whit.

The fact that the puppets are not, after all, human, but mere wooden automatons, accentuates on the one hand the subhuman character of so much of what passes for human behavior at the Fair. It suggests the image of life—all vileness and irrationality—held by the Fair-going public. The sinfulness which relates Ursula to "the first woman, a ribbe" (II.ii.51) and Adam Overdo to his eponymous first ancestor is reduced to its most mechanistic and most contemptible. On the other hand, the fact that the puppets cannot decompose, that they are heartless little dummies exempt from the evils of the flesh, lends a certain pathos to flesh and blood itself.

There is no particular surprise in Jonson's use of the puppets to represent live people in their Bergsonian aspect. His attitude toward

the puppets, however, is unexpectedly indulgent, and his attitude toward their critics correspondingly severe. Jonson's early plays, especially the "comicall satyres" (except for the revised version of *Every Man Out of His Humour*), supply not only a sharp image of the real world but also a supra-real world of divine truth and justice by which the ordinary world is to be judged. Over and above the follies of society stands the high court of Cynthia in *Cynthia's Revels* or the tribunal of Roman dignitaries in *Poetaster*, from which semi-divine embodiments of virtue and justice pronounce sentence on the contemptible antics below.

*Volpone*, too, has its high court of justice, but this is no longer represented as infallible. Though ready to find this truth, and capable of recognizing it if it appears without disguise, the Venetian Scrutineo shares with the rest of the world a proneness to mistake vice for virtue, folly for wisdom, appearance for reality. In *Epicene* and in *The Alchemist* this transcendent world has been discarded entirely and with it the higher standards of justice to which the author could appeal in order to administer formal correction to his fools. *Bartholomew Fair*, finally, turns justice topsy-turvy. This time it is the guardians of virtue who are exposed and mocked, and the rogues and fools who are vindicated. And to execute this subversive justice, the puppet play supplants the high tribunal as an instrument of correction.

Justice Adam Overdo embodies in his own person this reversal of standards. The learned man, the savior of the commonwealth, the public officer fired by high ethical ideals, appears unexpectedly as the bumbling magistrate, victimized by his own learning and his misdirected crusading fervor. Like Morose in *Epicene*, Overdo has acquired most of his knowledge of life from books, and just as Morose attempts, with ludicrous results, to translate courtly literature into daily practice, so Overdo tries to turn the rhetoric of the ancients into a code for living and a mirror for magistrates. But instead of being, like Morose, morbidly satiric, Overdo is simply quixotic. The ridicule attached to his intimacy with Latin authors and his affected Stoicism implies a new recognition in Jonson that learning itself is not enough to preserve a man from folly,<sup>4</sup> just as the billing and cooing of the Littlewits teach us, more emphatically than anywhere else in Jonson, that innocence can coexist with inanity.

The aggressive declaration prefixed to *Every Man Out of His Humour*: "if we faile, / We must impute it to this onely chance, / 'Arte hath an enemy cal'd Ignorance'" (Ind., 217-19), has mellowed into a realization that art has other enemies, among them the learned themselves. Overdo, who quotes Horace and Persius, distrusts the

<sup>4</sup> At least, it is not enough to preserve a magistrate from folly. See Jonson's paraphrase from Erasmus in the *Discoveries*: "Wise, is rather the Attribute of a Prince, then learned, or good. The learned man profits others, rather than himselfe: the good man, rather himselfe then others: But the Prince commands others, and doth himselfe" (1003-6). Overdo is, precisely, both learned and good, and yet a fool.

players and poets as much as any illiterate citizen's wife. The classical authors he has memorized are utterly unable to guide him through the mazes of rascality he has resolved to spy out at the Fair. His lofty Stoicism, like that of Fielding's Parson Adams, crumbles when confronted by the evidence of his own folly. And with the recognition of his own involvement in human foolishness comes his release from false patterns of perception.

Overdo's self-appointed role as savior of the republic links him directly with the canting Puritan elder, Zeal-of-the-Land Busy. Busy may be said to comprise everything censorious and morally scathing in Jonson's own view of the world and might, perhaps, in an earlier play, have had the satisfaction of dissolving "this knot of spiders" (*CR*, III.iv.88) and whipping vice until it bled. Though he and Overdo quarrel, they are allied in the one matter which is a touchstone for all else: their attitude toward the Fair. The Fair, for one the symbol of everything carnal summed up in the word "abomination," is for the other the symbol of everything illegal and disorderly summed up in the term "enormity." This bond between them, moreover, is not accidental, but reflects a real state of affairs, the alliance between the Puritan preachers and the city magistrates against playhouses and popular recreations of all kinds.<sup>6</sup>

Busy and Overdo recoil in virtuous horror, as their live counterparts might have recoiled, from the iniquities of tobacco, bottle-ale, and roast pig. Both come to the Fair to reclaim or destroy it, and both create enough commotion to wind up in the stocks as disturbers of the peace. In the stocks, each welcomes his punishment with a certain masochistic relish: one regards it as an affliction consequent on and signatory of his sainthood; the other thinks of it as affording the opportunity for a display of Stoic indifference. Both, finally, rise in wrath against the puppet show, the crowning abomination, the final enormity, and are at that moment jolted out of their affectations and converted, brought down to the level of the vulgar humanity they have pretended to judge.

Like Busy and Overdo, Wasp may be said to represent the moral authority of the earlier plays subverted, though in his case the authority is only tutorial, not the public jurisdiction of the pulpit or the magistracy. The satiric commentator—the Asper or Crites of an earlier period—who remained scornfully aloof, passing judgment on the parade of fools, has now become, in this avatar, the frenzied busybody whose passionate exposures of folly in others serves only to expose it the more damningly in himself. Wasp's relatively private relationship to the Fair does not abate the intensity of his dislike for it, which approaches that of Busy and Overdo, and coincides with theirs at several points. He expresses fury at his pupil's habit of singing "vile tunes." He denounces the London signs and the vogue of tobacco as angrily as a Puritan reformer and labels as "heathen"

<sup>6</sup> See E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (Oxford, 1923), I, 269-307.



things the frivolities that fascinate Cokes. Generally speaking, the sight of others enjoying themselves seems to enrage him. There is a hint of puritanic disapproval in his anger at Cokes's greediness for fruit. Fittingly, then, he becomes, with Busy and Overdo, the third disturber of the peace to be placed in the stocks, and the third disruptive element to be brought to his senses by the rough medicine of the puppet show.

We cannot, however, assign a consistent motive for all of Wasp's agitation, as we can in the case of Busy or Overdo. Wasp is animated to a considerable extent by mere perversity. A kind of senseless contradiction sputters through all of his speeches. With no provocation, he abuses Littlewit rudely throughout the first act. He bickers stridently with Mrs. Overdo, claiming a precedency over her in the management of Cokes which she has no wish to dispute. He embarks on futile wrangles with Cokes over such trivialities as whether Cokes shall or shall not examine the marriage license. Having so commenced, he continues for the rest of the day, quarreling passionately with everyone who crosses his path and, characteristically, with himself not least. Finally, after a long day of self-imposed vexation, he reaches his earthly paradise in the drunken game of "vapours" before Ursula's tent. Here, where the rest contradict each other lazily for sport, Wasp contradicts more than ever out of pure truculence.<sup>6</sup>

This apparently meaningless perversity may be elucidated with reference to the key concept of "vapours." Although the word belongs almost exclusively to the vocabulary of the roaring horse-courser, Master Jordan Knockhem, its implications extend well beyond Knockhem himself. In the most limited sense, vapors is simply a game played by several of the characters in Act IV, a kind of drunken mock quarrel explained marginally by Jonson: "*Here they continue their game of vapours, which is non sense. Euery man to oppose the last man that spoke: whethe[r] it concern'd him, or no.*" The game, thus, with its emphasis on nonsense contradiction, is little more than a formalized version of Wasp's ordinary behavior, which explains, perhaps, how Wasp is able to triumph in it over the whole assembly of noisy swaggerers. The first and more limited meaning of the term "vapour," then, based on the game, is "a hectoring, bullying form of speech, intended to arouse real or mock quarrels."<sup>7</sup>

The more general meaning of the term—"disposition, conceit, fancy, caprice, whim"—associates it closely with the older Jonsonian word "humour," for which, in fact, in this play, it becomes a substitute.<sup>8</sup> The two were already linked in the popular psychology of the

<sup>6</sup> Brome's *Covent-Garden Weeded*, an inept imitation of *Bartholomew Fair*, contains a character modeled on Wasp whose name, Crosswill, more clearly indicates this ruling trait.

<sup>7</sup> Definitions are from Carroll Storrs Alden, ed., *Bartholomew Fair*, Yale Studies in English, XXV (New York, 1904), 172. Alden has tabulated sixty-nine occurrences of the word.

<sup>8</sup> See Enck, *Jonson and the Comic Truth*, p. 190, and Charles Read Baskerville, *English Elements in Jonson's Early Comedy*, University of Texas Studies in



period: vapors were thought to be the fumes arising from the humors which acted directly on the brain. Strictly speaking, their effects would be identical. In Jonson, however, the shift in terms involves a shift in meaning. Humor referred chiefly to a physiological unbalance. Secondarily, it connoted affectation; its commonest symptom was mimicry, a ridiculous straining to become what one was not, or else an affected attempt to differ from others. As a primarily self-induced malady, it was amenable to purgation through ridicule. The vapors, on the other hand, seem to represent a norm of perversity inseparable from flesh and blood, a kind of original sin of temperament which may be acknowledged and to some extent neutralized, but never really cured. Unlike the humors, which tend to make men affect singularity and withdraw from each other, the vapors tend to make them intrude on each other, to meddle and quarrel.

For Swift, who uses the term in a sense roughly analogous to Jonson's, vapors are responsible for most of the mad, absurd, and hostile actions of mankind. Every species of madness, according to the digression on the subject in *A Tale of a Tub*, "proceeds from a redundancy of vapours."<sup>9</sup> But so, also, do other more ordinary kinds of activity:

if the moderns mean by madness, only a disturbance or transposition of the brain, by force of certain vapours issuing up from the lower faculties, then has this madness been the parent of all those mighty revolutions that have happened in empire, in philosophy, and in religion.<sup>10</sup>

*Bartholomew Fair*, like *A Tale of a Tub*, reduces all human activity to the gross level of an organic disturbance. Whether it is the silly fatuity of a Cokes or the out-and-out lunacy of a Troubleall, our behavior comes down to a series of reflexes stimulated in the "lower faculties." In this way, the human animal becomes as much of a mechanistic puppet as the puppets themselves.

The tendency of the vapors to bind men together and at the same time to set them quarreling with one another appears not only in the case of Wasp, but almost as strikingly in the case of Quarlous, who even more than Wasp retains the functions of the older satiric presenter, since it is chiefly by his agency and that of his companion Winwife that the procession of fools who visit the Fair is effectively ridiculed. Quarlous and Winwife go to the Fair expressly to enjoy the "fine Acts" of amusement promised by Cokes, and a substantial number of scenes find them on stage solely as spectators and interpreters. Yet, as his name suggests, Quarlous is one of the most hot-headed and pugnacious of the characters, almost as vaporous as Wasp. Where the older satiric expositor belonged to a higher order of reality

English, I (Austin, 1911), 43-44. See also the passage in *Every Man in His Humour* (Q.I.iv.205-20) which links vapors with humors.

<sup>9</sup> *Gulliver's Travels, A Tale of a Tub, Battle of the Books*, ed. William Alfred Eddy (New York, 1933), p. 497.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 494.

than the fools, and mixed with them only to deliver acrimonious judgment on them, here he is engulfed by their world and infected with their folly. No sooner have Winwife and Quarulous entered the Fair than they fall into an ugly quarrel with Ursula and Knockhem. Their role as witnesses crumbles rapidly, until by the end of the day they are using the services of the cutpurse, Edgeworth, to further their own matrimonial projects.

The vapors, then, though they issue in quarrels, at the same time are a compelling reminder of the kinship between all men. There is, in this play, no escaping one's involvement with the rest of one's species. John J. Enck has observed the prominence in *Bartholomew Fair* of figurative language referring to the family. The image of Wasp as dry nurse to Cokes, Goody Trash with her "ginger-bread-progeny," Overdo's search for a son as reflected in his solicitude over Edgeworth, and Ursula's tendency to become "a kind of universal mother" mirror the dramatic fact that "in this play, for the first time since *Every Man in His Humour*, family relationships are depicted on the stage."<sup>11</sup> Other images exhibit people in gregarious groups larger than the family, in herds, flocks, and tribes. Such language stresses the communal impulses of the species, the forces of family and society which bind it together, rather than the aberrations which splinter it into disconnected atoms. In contrast to the misanthropic withdrawal of a Morose or the calculated seclusion of a Volpone, or the self-absorbed egomania of the characters of *Every Man Out of His Humour*, the Fair draws its visitors and its inhabitants together into the fold of a shared humanity and involves them inextricably with one another.

For all of this disorderly gregariousness, the vapors may be held responsible. But even in their stricter sense of quarrelsomeness the vapors tyrannize over the action. From the wrangling between Wasp and his acquaintances in Act I, we pass to the nearly uninterrupted series of squabbles that mark the day's events at the Fair. Almost every episode culminates in a brawl. The Justice discovers that he cannot maintain his Olympian altitude above the general tumult, and even the fastidious Winwife finds himself twice drawn into quarrels. Three times the constables appear to halt a quarrel and to carry the offending party off to the stocks, until at length they in their turn succumb to the vapors and fall to fighting with the madman Troubleall.

A preliminary climax to all of this vaporing occurs in the dreary game of vapors in Act IV, but the real climax comes in the puppet play. The puppet show is a positive orgy of quarrels, a saturnale of vapors. It starts instantly with a high-pitched exchange of insults between the sculler, old Cole, and the puppet Leander, in which the puppeteer, Leatherhead, takes a lively part. It continues with a nasty verbal skirmish between Damon and Pythias, and at length, after a lull, degenerates into a vulgar free-for-all, in which, as the marginal

<sup>11</sup> *Jonson's Imagery*, p. 349.

directions instruct, "*The Puppets quarrell and fall together by the cares.*" "*They fight,*" directs Jonson marginally as the conflict grows shriller, and Knockhem makes the appropriate comment: "There be fine vapours" (V.iv.354).

With the appearance of the ghost of Dionysius, fresh quarrels seem to be brewing when Busy storms in with his anathemas to halt the show. He, too, is inspired by vapors, and looks "for a bickering, ere long, and then a battell." His intrusion leads to a new quarrel with a realignment of forces. Again Knockhem supplies the inevitable gloss, "Good *Banbury-vapours*" (V.vi.25-26). The puppets thus raise to a hysterical pitch the vaporous proceedings of the day. They berate each other out of sheer perversity. No reason is offered for their incessant trading of insults, nor any intimation that they might act otherwise. As miniature men, created and activated in the image of live men, they simply do what is "natural": they quarrel. In their grotesque parody of humanity, they prove the breath of the spirit to be nothing but wind. The "inspiration" which animates them, like that which animates Busy, is pure wind.<sup>12</sup>

The puppets, through their associations with Bartholomew Cokes, reflect still another trait peculiar to the denizens of the world and the Fair: human littleness and childishness. Cokes, "the most finished picture of a simpleton that the mimetic art ever produced,"<sup>13</sup> epitomizes silly humanity itself, as Jonson views it in the *Discoveries*:

*What petty things they are, wee wonder at? like children, that esteeme every trifle; and preferre a Fairing before their Fathers: what difference is betweene us, and them? but that we are dearer Fooles, Cockscornes, at a higher rate? They are pleas'd with Cockleshells, Whistles, Hobby-horses, and such like: wee with Statues, marble Pillars, Pictures, guilded Roofes, where under-neath is Lath, and Lyme; perhaps Lome. (1437-44)*

All the world's a Fair, as a critic has observed of this paraphrase from Seneca,<sup>14</sup> and all the people in it merely Cokeses. Cokes is linked with the Fair in many ways. It is, as he understands, "his" Fair, the world for which he was created. In name and character he is the human counterpart of the gingerbread images sold by Joan Trash, as well as of the hobbyhorses vended by Lantern Leatherhead, and of the puppets. Like Master Stephen in *Every Man in His Humour*, he is "a drumme; for euery one may play vpon him," or "a childes whistle" that anyone may pipe on (F III.ii.23-25). He is the ideal gull in a world of conycatchers, the eternal credulous spectator in a universe of marvels. Only playthings attract him, the little mimic images of reality

<sup>12</sup> Once again Swift is relevant. The digression on the *Æolists* (Section VIII of *A Tale of a Tub*) demonstrates "the original cause of all things to be wind" and "the gift of BELCHING to be the noblest act of a rational creature." Eddy, pp. 479, 481. Cf. *Bartholomew Fair*, IV.iv.81: "Call you this vapours? this is such belching of quarrell, as I neuer heard." The enthusiastic preachers, as Swift describes them, operate in a manner not dissimilar to that of the puppets, by means of mechanical contrivances which convey air into them.

<sup>13</sup> W[illiam] Gifford, ed., *Works of Ben Jonson* (London, 1816), IV, 541.

<sup>14</sup> Harry Levin, ed., *Ben Jonson: Selected Works* (New York, 1938), p. 21.

of which the Fair contains an inexhaustible supply, which it seems to procreate as it procreates so much else.

Everything comes in families and in diminutives. As Ursula presides over her roast pigs and is the mother of these, so Goody Trash reigns maternally over her gingerbread images, while Leatherhead is father both to the hobbyhorses and the puppets, the master exhibitor of folly in miniature. The toys themselves come in families; Cokes buys "sixe horses . . . And the three Iewes trumps; and halfe a dozen o' Birds . . . that fine painted great Lady, and her three women for state" (III.iv.76-82), and a nest of violins, "euery one a size lesse then another" (III.iv.91-92). The world shrinks to a Lilliputian array of dolls and baubles in which children play at being grown up.

The microcosmic images come to a natural climax in the puppet play. The puppets are linked with the dolls and hobbyhorses not only etymologically (*pupa*, *poupée*, etc.) and through the joint enterprise of Lantern Leatherhead, but because Cokes names them after his toys.

I am in loue with the *Actors* already, and I'll be allyed to them presently. . . . *Hero* shall be my fayring: But, which of my fayrings? (Le' me see) i'faith, my fiddle! and *Leander* my fiddle-sticke: then *Damon*, my drum; and *Pythias*, my Pipe, and the ghost of *Dionysius*, my hobby-horse. (V.iii.131-37)

Having thus "allyed" himself to the puppets, he confirms the alliance by acting out with them their own diminutive passions and sharing their vapors.

The puppet play, written in the jog-trot couplets of the old interludes, like the jig in *Volpone*, shrinks literature as well as life into the tiny compass of a peep show and decomposes it into the grossness of its baser elements. For this technique of belittlement, Jonson had sufficient precedent. In burlesquing the most famous mythological poem of the previous generation, he was merely completing a process begun by his Latin masters, the satirists of the silver age. Juvenal had commenced his satires with a sweeping refusal to write on the old mythological themes, and Persius had disrespectfully protested that he had never washed his lips in the horsy spring;<sup>15</sup> both had promised their readers to stick to faithful transcriptions of daily life. The glut of mythological poems that poured from English presses in the 1590's had produced a somewhat similar revulsion in Jonson's generation. And one characteristic rejoinder was to combine realism with travesty. One need only cite Nashe's earlier parody of the Hero and Leander story<sup>16</sup> or Dekker's casual vulgarization of the Orpheus myth<sup>17</sup> or, for that matter, the scathing debasement of the Troy story in *Troilus and Cressida* ("All the argument is a whore and a cuckold"), to see the puppet show as part of a familiar process which placed heroic story

<sup>15</sup> *Juvenal and Persius*, ed. C. G. Ramsay, revised ed., Loeb Classical Library (London, 1940), pp. 2, 8, 310.

<sup>16</sup> *Works*, ed. R. B. McKerrow (London, 1903-1910), III, 195-201.

<sup>17</sup> *Non-Dramatic Works*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart, Huth Library (London, 1885), II, 101.

under the disillusioning lens of satire and found it to be as squalid and carbuncular as anything in quotidian life.

This aspect of the motion is foreshadowed when Quarlous likens Leatherhead and the hobbyhorses to "*Orpheus* among the beasts, with his Fiddle, and all," and Goody Trash to "*Ceres* selling her daughters picture, in *Ginger-worke*" (II.v.8-12). Here the archetypal poet of antiquity appears as a rude bawler of ballads, his lyre a set of toy fiddles and jews' harps; the goddess of the harvest presides over stale gingerbread cut into figurines. Similarly, the monarch of the sea is depressed to the status of a noisy roarer like Knockhem: "S'lud, I'll see him, and roare with him, too, and hee roar'd as loud as *Neptune*" (II.v.28).

The puppet show completes this process of domestication, bringing together two stories, that of Hero and Leander—only very roughly after Marlowe—and that of Damon and Pythias—only very roughly after Edwards<sup>18</sup>—into the London scene. Leander becomes a dyer's son, Hero a Bankside tart, and Damon and Pythias a pair of ale-house roarers. The two great themes of Renaissance literature, love and friendship, are thus debased, along with everything else in the play, to the level of mere vapors. The noble love of Hero and Leander becomes a smutty tavern anecdote. The even nobler tale of Damon and Pythias becomes an obscene tavern brawl. And both stories reach a simultaneous climax in the battle of the puppets, where the vapors go wholly out of control.

Jonson's attitude toward the puppet show is complex. Puppets, along with "the concupiscence of *Iigges*, and *Dances*," ordinarily aroused his aversion: "a man cannot imagine that thing so foolish, or rude, but will find, and enjoy an Admirer; at least, a Reader, or *Spectator*. The Puppets are seene now in despite of the Players" (*Disc.*, 608-11). But in *Bartholomew Fair*, as the Fair is the microcosm, so the puppet show becomes the microtheater. By enlisting our sympathies on behalf of Leatherhead and his troupe and against the reformers, Jonson adds a new element to the familiar rebuttals of poets against their Puritan attackers. The Puritans had leveled much of their fire against the corrupt moral atmosphere of the playhouses, and when they discussed the dramatic fare itself, they tended to dwell upon the more specifically popular kinds of entertainment—morris dancing, jiggling, clowning, and the like.

The poets, for their part, not only failed to defend these ruder entertainments, they disclaimed any intention of defending them, often adding their own condemnations to those of the Puritans before going on to exalt tragedy and epic. Lodge tells Gosson that, "if you had wisely wayed the abuse of poetry, if you had reprehended the

<sup>18</sup> There was at least one other play about Damon and Pythias, that by Henry Chettle in 1600, now lost (Chambers, III, 266), but from the looseness of the imitation of Marlowe, it can probably be assumed that Jonson is burlesquing the theme rather than any particular version of it. He had used the Damon and Pythias motif himself early in his career in *The Case is Altered*.

foolish fantasies of our Poets *nomine non re* which they bring forth on stage, my self wold haue liked of you and allowed your labor." And he proceeds to cap Gosson's rebuke of such abuses with his own:

I abhorre those poets that saur of ribaldry: I will with the zealous admit the expullcion of such enormities: poetry is dispraised not for the folly that is in it, but for the abuse which manye ill Wryters couller by it. Beleeue mee the magistrats may take aduise (as I knowe wisely can) to roote out those odde rymes which runnes in euery rascales mouth, sauring of rybaldry. Those foolishe ballets that are admitted make poets good and godly practises to be refused.<sup>19</sup>

Sidney, similarly, rehearsing the charges of immorality brought against the stage, laments the low state of "the Comick, whom naughtie Play-makers and Stage-keepers haue iustly made odious," before going on to censure the abuse of tragedy, always adulterated by "scurrility, vnwoorthy of any chast eares, or some extreame shew of doltishnes."<sup>20</sup>

The preceding generation had thus admitted many of the bitterest of the Puritan complaints. It had chosen, on the whole, to defend not the living theater but the Idea of a Theater. It had lamented with the Puritans the iniquities of the public stage. Jonson's defense, far more radical, meets the attack head on. It grounds itself firmly on the premise that if the ministry and the civic authorities are clamoring for the suppression of the theater, then the theater, as one of the trustees of the festival spirit, must be defended even in its vilest and rowdiest manifestations, even when the appeal is exclusively to the senses and not at all to the understanding.

The crude jollities of Fair and carnival, as well as the pompous pageantries of the stage, satisfy a legitimate craving for joy.<sup>21</sup> There is no attempt to whitewash the Fair: corruption oozes from every

<sup>19</sup> *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, ed. G. Gregory Smith (London, 1904), I, 76.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 176, 199.

<sup>21</sup> The history of the Fair runs parallel to that of the theater at some points, and in its beginnings is perhaps interwoven with it. The Fair originates in the Priory and Hospital of St. Bartholomew, founded in the reign of Henry I, at which worshippers and pilgrims gather on the saint's feast day. (The Flemish word *kermesse* preserves this ecclesiastical link intact.) The feast day led to the establishment of a market, with attendant diversions, regularized by royal charter, which continued to flourish after the dissolution of the monasteries. Until the fifteenth century, crown and city vied for control (chiefly financial) of the Fair, as they later competed for control of the playhouses. The Fair, like the theaters, suffered periodic suppression on account of the plague and attracted the animus of Puritans. See Henry Morley, *Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair*, 4th ed. (London, 1892), pp. 1-113. Morley, who links the origin of the stage directly to the early fairs, thinks of Jonson's play as the visit of a grown-up, sophisticated heir (the English drama) to its old nurse, who is still crooning the childish ditties and telling over to herself the old stories that once satisfied the lord of the great house (pp. 115-16). As for the puppet show, Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage* (London, 1903), II, 157, suggests that "the use of puppets to provide a figured representation of the mystery of the Nativity, seems to have preceded the use for the same purpose of living and speaking persons," and that the custom of using puppets survives in the Christmas *crèche*. In either case, Jonson's use of the Fair and the puppets seems to carry us back to the festival and ecclesiastical origins of the drama.



seam of it, and the little theater of the motion proves to be more than a match for its real-life counterparts as a gathering ground of whores and pimps and rascals. As for the puppet show itself, it is a monstrous travesty of true drama, not only scurrilous, but disjointed, chaotic, and inanely repetitious. Yet the puppet show epitomizes the Fair, which in turn epitomizes the world, a world inhabited by the descendants of Adam. If one is to legislate against folly, where can the legislation stop? And who is so disinfected of flesh and blood as to qualify as a legislator?

The old game of *tu quoque* leads this time to a new conclusion, in which the morons and numskulls triumph over the reformers and justicers. Littlewit's puppet play, with Lantern Leatherhead as its impresario and Bartholomew Cokes as its most impassioned advocate, becomes the agent of reform for the reformers. As in Shakespeare's "saturnalian" comedy, pleasure, rather than learning or wisdom, has become the touchstone. "The butts in the festive plays consistently exhibit their unnaturalness by being kill-joys,"<sup>22</sup> and the exhilarating finale of *Bartholomew Fair* revolves about the rebaptism of the repressive spirits in a communal joy.

Wasp is the first to be converted. Discovering that Cokes has learned of his session in the stocks, he resigns his tutorial office with sententious formality: "Do's he know that? nay, then the date of my *Authority* is out; I must thinke no longer to raigne, my gouernment is at an end. He that will correct another, must want fault in himselfe" (V.iv.97-100). With this recognition that he is, like the rest of the world, "an Asse" and "a kinne to the *Cokeses*," Wasp is ready to become a spectator himself, to participate in Cokes's pursuit of pleasure instead of thwarting it, to join in agreement with his fellows instead of perpetually setting his hand against theirs. Vestigial flashes of sarcasm recur, but his echo of Cokes's delight at the puppets signifies his renewed acceptance of life: "Cok. Ho! well acted my *Drum*, well acted my *Pipe*, well acted still. WAS. Well acted, with all my heart" (V.iv.265-67).

Busy's reformation is more sudden, and has been regarded by some as a flaw. But its abruptness accords well with the arbitrary motions of the vapors, "the mechanical operations of the spirit." The same vapors that have inspired a fanatic (though hypocritical) denial of life may shift to inspire a fresh acceptance of it. In his dispute with the puppet Dionysius (whose name enjoys incidental propriety in that as god of the theater and proverbial lord of the revels he symbolizes everything hated by Puritanism) Busy repeats some of the arguments his pamphleteering forebears had already urged against the stage.

Sir Edmund Chambers recalls that "Gosson, who in his second book affects a methodical treatment of the subject . . . justifies himself from

<sup>22</sup> C. L. Barber, "The Saturnalian Pattern in Shakespeare's Comedy," *Sewanee Review*, LIX (1951), 599.

Tertullian in finding the efficient cause of plays in none other than the incarnate Devil."<sup>23</sup> Busy, in reply to Leatherhead's claim of legality—"I haue the Master of the *Reuell's* hand for't, Sir"—retorts, "The Master of [the] *Rebells* hand, thou hast; *Satan's*!" (V.v.18-20). He climaxes his onslaught with another familiar accusation derived from Tertullian: "you are an abomination: for the Male, among you, putteth on the apparell of the *Female*, and the *Female* of the *Male*" (V.v.99-100), to which the puppet replies by pulling up its garment and revealing its sexlessness. One does not wish to be solemn about such a detail. Nevertheless, if Jonson is not here alluding to the fact that female roles were played by boys—and hence neither by women nor by full-fledged men—he is at least suggesting the essential innocence of the theater, an innocence based on its quality of make-believe and on its character as licensed release for the childlike and carnal instincts in all men.

Leatherhead presents "nothing, but what is licens'd by authority" (V.v.14-15). To deny the need for release is to deny one's own carnal and childlike impulses, and to become, as a result, even more blindly and self-deludedly a puppet. Only, it would appear, by acknowledging his kinship with the puppets can a man transcend his own grossness, vaporessness, and automatism. The moment of fullest recognition thus precedes the conversion: "*Nay*," declares the puppet Dionysius, "*I'le proue against ere a Rabbin of 'hem all, that my standing is as lawfull as his; that I speake by inspiration, as well as he; that I haue as little to doe with learning as he; and doe scorne her helps as much as he*" (V.v.109-12). With this, the identification between Busy and the puppets is complete. Thoroughly confuted by the "demonstration," Busy abdicates as reformer and subsides into the more wholesome role of spectator: "Let it goe on. For I am chang'd, and will become a beholder with you!" (V.v.116-17).

It remains only for this lesson to be learned by Justice Overdo, who interrupts the motion a second time, to throw off his disguise and expose the enormities he has been collecting all day. The worst, and least suspected, enormity proves to be his own wife, in a state of drunken coma, seated amid the most disreputable members of the audience. With this revelation, Overdo is stricken into a stiffness as wooden as that of the puppets. The further disclosures proffered by Quarlous teach him that his punitive fervor has only embroiled him in the enormities he has been pursuing, that with his disguises and his "political brain" he has primarily hoodwinked himself.

The last foe of the Fair is thus himself revealed a kin to the puppets, a helpless victim of the ubiquitous vapors and an unwitting participant in them. Quarlous draws the moral squarely: "remember you are but *Adam*, *Flesh*, and *blood*! you haue your frailty, forget your other name of *Ouerdoo*, and inuite vs all to supper" (V.vi.96-98). It is left to the archetypal puppet, Cokes, to pronounce the final

<sup>23</sup> Elizabethan Stage, I, 254.



words of the play, which carry the human comedy indefinitely forward into the future: "and bring the *Actors* along, wee'll ha' the rest o' the *Play* at home" (V.vi.114-15).

One might suggest, finally, that with this play, in which the reformers are reformed by the fools, Jonson confesses his own frailty and his own flesh and blood. Though he continues to satirize popular taste, he now—momentarily at least—identifies his own interests with it. Having, like *Busy*, failed to affect public morality, having, like *Wasp*, failed to educate fools, and having, like *Adam Overdo*, failed to maintain his Stoic aloofness from the uninstructed, he resigns himself to the status of a fool among fools.<sup>24</sup> Censorious morality, tutorial impatience, and magisterial judgment all break down in the face of his being but *Adam*, flesh and blood. The falling out among thieves, in *The Alchemist*, ended in a total and scarring rupture. In *Bartholomew Fair*, the hucksters and sharpsters of the Fair quarrel among themselves—*Trash* with *Leatherhead*, *Ursula* with *Knockhem*—but close ranks solidly when confronted by attacks from outsiders. Jonson, in similar fashion, having waged the war of the theaters at the turn of the century, and having spent fifteen years denouncing popular taste and the usual fare of the public playhouses, now closes ranks with them to present a united front against the enemies of all the theaters, the Puritan preachers and the city magistrates, whose hostility, unappeased by such appeals to flesh and blood, was shortly to score a decisive triumph.

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<sup>24</sup> The extent to which *Busy* and *Overdo* may be said to represent projections of Jonson himself has already been suggested above. In the case of *Wasp*, one might add a relevant biographical fact. The year before the play was written, Jonson had been on the Continent as tutor to Sir Walter Raleigh's son and had had himself more than a taste of an unmanageable ward. "Raleigh was, in the year of the play, like Cokes, 'nineteen yeere old', and 'now vpon his making and marring'; his education had been unfortunate, though in a different way; and his mother's management was extremely well calculated to suggest the doubt of 'what may happen vnder a womans gouernment' which Waspe insinuates in respect of Cokes's 'natural sister'; finally, Waspe's culminating embarrassment in conveying his charge through the streets of London, and his fear of his 'learning of vile tunes, which he will sing at supper, and in the sermon-times', were hardly described without a vivid remembrance of even more compromising scenes enacted at the governor's expense in the streets of Paris." Herford and Simpson, II, 142. (See also the passage in the *Conversations with Drummond*, lines 295-305.) This lends added weight to the supposition that in *Wasp*, as in *Overdo* and *Busy*, Jonson is lampooning certain feelings and attitudes of his own which had previously been dominant.

DRAMATIC CRITICISM IN THE *CRITICAL REVIEW*,  
1756-1785

PART I

By CLAUDE E. JONES

English drama, except for the work of Goldsmith and Sheridan, is negligible in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. This is not true of dramatic criticism, however, for such masters as Morgann, Steevens, Johnson, and Francklin were doing their best work during this period. Although the amount of space devoted by the *Critical Review*, during the first thirty years of its existence, to criticism of the drama is small, its comments are of interest to the student as an expression of what was, in general, the opinion of the best educated men of the time. We know that included among the contributors to the *Critical* during its first quarter-century were George Steevens, Tobias Smollett, Thomas Francklin, Samuel Johnson, and Oliver Goldsmith.<sup>1</sup> The opinions of such a staff could not fail to form a body of criticism typical of the spirit and good sense of the period.

It would, of course, be impossible for critics during any age to refrain from regretting the degeneracy of the times, and this is as true of the *Critical* as of the magazines of 1959. Thomas Brown's comment on the state of dramatic writing in 1703 shows that the "Augustan Age" was not without such protest:

Characters they [the dramatists] supply with a *Smutty Song*, Humour with a *Dance*, and Argument with *Lightning and Thunder*, which has so often re-  
priev'd many a *Scurvy Play* from Damning. . . . There's as much difference  
between their Rhimes and Solid Verse, as between the Royal Psalmist, and  
Hopkins and Sternhold with their collars of Ay's and Eeke's about them.<sup>2</sup>

Never during its first thirty years did the *Critical* lash the age quite so strenuously as this; yet we find comments that the poor quality of contemporary dramatic poetry is due to the fact that in tragedy "we write just as we build, only for the present time, and not . . . for posterity."<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the critics, displeased with modern authors who "tell old stories new ways,"<sup>4</sup> regret that, since the days of South-  
erne and Rowe, tragedy has deteriorated in England, while improving in France.<sup>5</sup>

Since the war of ancients and moderns had not even yet reached a conclusion satisfactory to everyone, it is well to glance at the review-

<sup>1</sup> Probably there were others of almost equal caliber, but our knowledge of who composed the *Critical* staff is limited.

<sup>2</sup> *Amusements, Serious and Comical* (London, 1703), p. 63.

<sup>3</sup> XIII (Jan., 1762), 54.

<sup>4</sup> XI (Feb., 1761), 134.

<sup>5</sup> VIII (Dec., 1759), 480.

ers' attitude toward the classical dramatists. Although much is said by the critics concerning Greek and Roman drama in general, the individual classical dramatists receive little attention. Euripides is censured as against nature,<sup>6</sup> while Aristophanes' *Clouds* is denounced<sup>7</sup> because of dullness. Two features of Greek drama, judging by the few references which occur, are held in low estimation by the reviewers: stichomythy and the Chorus. To the former, only two references are made, one of which speaks of its "disagreeable monotony."<sup>8</sup> The Chorus, however, is considered in more detail, and an interesting parallel is drawn:

If the excellence of the drama consists in representing life and manners, the Grecian choruses are certainly beauties improperly placed. The same holds good against the music; it undoubtedly has the same degree of merit as our operas have, but they are both equally unnatural.<sup>9</sup>

As to translation, our critic remarks, "Mr. Colman, in his Terence, introduced a new and elegant mode of translation, by using familiar blank verse."<sup>10</sup> The *Critical* notes further that "Plautus will necessarily appear to disadvantage, even in the best translation, inasmuch as he will want . . . the charm of classical expression, and the humour, which is in a great measure verbal,"<sup>11</sup> and that the difference between the theater of England and that of Greece and Rome is "the natural effect of changes which have happened in our prosody." It is also observed that "in translating drama, the language *to* is more important than the language *from*."<sup>12</sup>

It would be interesting to know whether there is any significance in the contradictory statements made in two articles in the *Critical*. In 1758 it is claimed that the rules of Horace and Aristotle are almost unknown in England,<sup>13</sup> while twenty-two years later we are informed that "No book has perhaps been more frequently read . . . than the

<sup>6</sup> LIII (Jan., 1782), 25.

<sup>7</sup> VIII (Aug., 1759), 157, where it is referred to as "Aristophanes's dullest, yet best known performance. . . . Custom has so connected prose with comic humour in this country, that a comedy written in verse will be relished by . . . few."

<sup>8</sup> L (Sept., 1780), 164. It is also referred to in LIII (Jan., 1782), 23, 27, where it is called "languid and uninteresting," as well as "flat and insipid."

<sup>9</sup> LIV (Nov., 1782), 350. John Pinkerton, *Letters of Literature* (London, 1785), p. 198, goes so far as to say, "The opera is a fairly complete copy of the ancient drama." This was a rather common idea at the time. Kames remarks (*Elements of Criticism*, 3rd ed. [Edinburgh, 1765], II, 408-409) that the Greek rules are the result of the natural limitations of their stage and the use of the Chorus; while in *Elfrida* (London, 1752) William Mason recommends the use of the Chorus to insure observance of the rules (p. ix).

<sup>10</sup> XXXV (Feb., 1773), 88. Duncan Campbell, in the *Sale of Authors* (London, 1767), says in this regard: "You may inform Messrs. Th-n and A-n, that I should have liked their Terence and Plautus better, had they been translated into plain prose, instead of blank verse, or prose on Stilts, a sort of measure neither authorized by the ancients, nor consistent with the genius of the English language" (p. 129).

<sup>11</sup> XXXV (Feb., 1773), 92.

<sup>12</sup> LIII (March, 1782), 161.

<sup>13</sup> VI (Nov., 1758), 464-65.

Ars Poetica."<sup>14</sup> Be that as it may, the most consistent attitude toward the classical dramatic critics is unfavorable throughout this period.<sup>15</sup> The same is true, in general, of the *Critical's* treatment of the rules,<sup>16</sup> especially in regard to the unities, although the necessity for some regular standards is recognized.<sup>17</sup>

During the first thirty years of its existence, the *Critical* did not, however, contain any significant discussion of the three unities. Although, as C. C. Green points out,<sup>18</sup> "The only one of the 'Mechanic rules' to retain any vitality in the eighteenth century was that of the three unities," the main points of the *Review's* attack on the rules in general are those restrictions which had been added to the Aristotelian and Horatian canons by Italian and French commentators. The minor rules, which were discussed in the *Critical* and which I shall consider in order, are concerned with the following: probability, diction, the number of acts, and poetic justice.

The attitude of the *Review* toward observance of most of the restrictions imposed by classical authority varies with the genre under consideration, but some general observations can be made. In one respect, the critics were in accord with the rules, namely, in regard to probability. For example, although the *Critical* allowed dramatists to mold the fables of nonhistorical works as they pleased, they were not to invent improbable incidents.<sup>19</sup> Despite the critics' agreement with William Cooke's rejection of the unities of time and place, the *Review* warns dramatists not to violate "that degree of probability which is a fundamental principle of the drama."<sup>20</sup> This was even extended to include any unnatural circumstances,<sup>21</sup> and it probably affected the approval of decorum.<sup>22</sup> In general, the critics recommended that diction be guided by good manners and common sense. They were

<sup>14</sup> L. (Oct., 1780), 253.

<sup>15</sup> VIII (Aug., 1759), 101; XLVIII (Aug., 1779), 132, 150.

<sup>16</sup> But see XIII (Jan., 1762), 137; XXVIII (Sept., 1769), 209; XLVIII (Aug., 1779), 132.

<sup>17</sup> V (March, 1758), 242; XXXIX (April, 1775), 310-11. See the preface to *Elfrida*. Furthermore, Kames, who is in favor of doing away with the unities of time and place (II, 409), says, "The unities of time and place are acknowledged by our best poets, though their practice seldom corresponds" (II, 404). He goes on to state that, "although in Greece, the unities were a matter of necessity, with our modern division into acts, such rules are only inconveniences" (II, 408). According to Lessing's *Hamburg Dramaturgy*, trans. in Barrett H. Clarke, *European Theories of the Drama* (Cincinnati, 1918), the poet's unpardonable fault is to leave us cold, but "if he interests us he may do as he likes with the little mechanical rules" (p. 254). And see Burgoyne's Preface to *The Heiress* (1786).

<sup>18</sup> *Neo-Classical Theory of Tragedy in England During the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass., 1934), p. 217. And see, *inter alia*, T. M. Raysor, "The Downfall of the Three Unities," *MLN*, XLII (1927), 5.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. XXXIX (March, 1775), 215: "The fable of this piece not being founded upon history is to be considered as the invention of the poet, who was therefore at full liberty to mold it according to the direction of his own genius."

<sup>20</sup> XXIX (April, 1770), 236.

<sup>21</sup> XLVIII (Sept., 1779), 236.

<sup>22</sup> See XI (Feb., 1761), 134-35: "A respectable character, we imagine, ought never to be exposed on the stage in a state of intoxication, especially before his mistress. It is a mortal sin against the *bienveillance*."

opposed to substitution of "low" for simple diction,<sup>23</sup> as well as technical jargon which could not be understood by the audience.<sup>24</sup>

In agreement with most of their contemporaries, the critics denied the necessity of five acts for contemporary drama, except where "according to reason it . . . appear[s] to the spectator as if the story 'cannot occupy' more or less space without tediousness or obscurity."<sup>25</sup> This is also the sentiment of another reviewer:

we shall take the liberty to make an observation or two on that well-known line in *Horace*,

*Neve minor, neu sit quinto productior actu.*

which though adopted by modern critics as an incontestable maxim, has, in our opinion, spoiled many more good plays than it has made: it is indeed only an arbitrary decision without any good reasons, as we ever heard, to support it: besides that it is a law utterly unknown to the masters of the *Grecian* theatre, those approved models of perfection, whose tragedies we know consisted of one continued act longer or shorter, according to the subject, together with the occasional interruption of the chorus. The length of the play and the number of acts, therefore, we imagine, should be proportioned to the fable, in the same manner as every thing made to contain should be suited to the size of that which is to be contained in it. There are many plots able to furnish out three good acts, which could not extend themselves to five, without the fashionable method of wire-drawing every circumstance and sentiment, till the whole matter is spread as thin as leaf gold, and as void of substance and spirit as a *French* poem.<sup>26</sup>

*The Rambler*<sup>27</sup> agrees with this point of view, while John Pinkerton denies the necessity as follows:

That five acts should be considered as an essential division of a perfect drama, rather than any other number, is perhaps one of the strangest instances in which reverence for a rule laid down by an ancient poet . . . has totally got the better of common sense.<sup>28</sup>

In tragedy, as elsewhere, the *Critical* demands a moral lesson. This is to be attained, ordinarily, by the punishment of the wicked and reward of the virtuous, for "Those who yet retain a true English taste, expect in an English tragedy, variety of characters, elevated sentiments, the prominent and striking features of nature, a number of unexpected and great incidents and the signal punishment of vice."<sup>29</sup> Although the *Review* denies<sup>30</sup> its adherence to what had been referred

<sup>23</sup> III (March, 1757), 266: "With superficial judges, as ranting will pass for passion, and bombast for sublimity, low and vulgar expression may also be mistaken for simplicity. From a studious affectation of this, an author may often deviate into very mean and servile language."

<sup>24</sup> Cf. XLI (March, 1776), 239-40, which deals with marine jargon which is "too profusely scattered through those theatrical productions where characters of this kind [sailors] are represented."

<sup>25</sup> XXV (Feb., 1768), 146.

<sup>26</sup> III (March, 1757), 259.

<sup>27</sup> No. 156 (Sept. 14, 1751).

<sup>28</sup> *Letters of Literature*, by Robert Heron [pseud.] (London, 1785), p. 133. Pinkerton's solution is as follows: "I look upon the division of the fable into three acts, with a beginning, a middle, and an end, as the most perfect, compact, and elegant, that the higher drama will admit" (p. 139).

<sup>29</sup> XXIX (March, 1770), 211.

<sup>30</sup> XXXVI (July, 1773), 73.

to in *The Spectator*, years before,<sup>31</sup> as "a ridiculous doctrine in modern criticism—Poetical Justice," to all intents and purposes this is what it desires.<sup>32</sup>

In order that tragedy may convey this moral impressively, it is necessary that the characters be dignified and appealing. This is done, in part, by elevating the language used<sup>33</sup> and, in part, by avoiding low phraseology and prose.<sup>34</sup> As to the characters, a critic mentions with approval the "fine glow of sentiment which animates the favourite heroes of tragedy, and that fascinating softness which endears its heroines."<sup>35</sup> Such characters need not be drawn from the nobility, however, but may come from the bourgeoisie.<sup>36</sup> Further, in tragedy the indignation of the audience should always be excited against vicious characters who "should never have a natural weakness, or a foible that arises from generosity."<sup>37</sup> Certain common faults are to be carefully avoided by authors of tragedy. The most glaring of these is allowing a character to describe his own emotions as though from the standpoint of an observer.<sup>38</sup>

Another feature which was gaining ground throughout the period was the preoccupation with love, which William Mason, in *Elfrida*, contends "is a passion very proper for tragedy."<sup>39</sup> The introduction of this emotion which, according to *The Lounger*,<sup>40</sup> "comes from the manners of the audience," is mentioned by *The Adventurer* as "One of the most remarkable differences betwixt ancient and modern drama."<sup>41</sup> In John Home's *Alfred*, according to the *Critical*, "love is too much the business."<sup>42</sup> A reviewer says of Lillo, "No man knew better how to seize the heart; to wring it with contending passions; to melt it into pity; to rouse it to honor; and to torture it with remorse."<sup>43</sup> Mrs. Brooke is also complimented for this ability.<sup>44</sup> For this purpose, it is necessary to see tragedies, although comedies can just as well be enjoyed in the closet.<sup>45</sup>

The content of tragedy is also discussed in the *Review*. For in-

<sup>31</sup> By Steele. XL (1712); see also Blair, *Letters on Rhetoric* (Philadelphia, 1844), p. 520.

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, the review of R. Jephson's *Court of Narbonne*, III (Dec., 1782), 456. In this regard, *The Lounger*, No. 28 (Aug. 13, 1785), says, "We are frequently more roused to a love of virtue and a hatred of vice, when virtue is unfortunate, and vice successful, than when each receives the recompense it deserves."

<sup>33</sup> LVII (April, 1784), 262.

<sup>34</sup> XXXVII (March, 1769), 222. Yet imagery and description are to be avoided: IX (Feb., 1760), 133.

<sup>35</sup> XXXVII (May, 1774), 396. And see Blair, *Letters on Rhetoric*, p. 519b.

<sup>36</sup> V (March, 1758), 237. And see *The Lounger*, No. 50 (Jan. 14, 1786).

<sup>37</sup> XL (Aug., 1775), 162-63.

<sup>38</sup> XXXVIII (Nov., 1774), 313. And see Kames, I, 448-51, and Blair, p. 552.

<sup>39</sup> Preface, p. iii. And see Voltaire, *Discours sur la Tragedie* (1731).

<sup>40</sup> No. 27 (Aug. 6, 1785).

<sup>41</sup> No. 113 (Tues., Dec. 4, 1753).

<sup>42</sup> XLV (April, 1778), 155.

<sup>43</sup> XV (April, 1763), 134.

<sup>44</sup> LI (Feb., 1781), 157: "The principal merit of this piece [*The Siege of Sinope*] is, its immediate application to the passions. It is written to the heart,

stance, the critics are opposed to a squeamishness which will not admit blood in the genre,<sup>46</sup> and they are favorable to Hannah More's *Percy*, "which is perhaps the bloodiest product of modern drama."<sup>47</sup> They also approve of tragedies which produce tears,<sup>48</sup> although they say that "Whining tragedies are, if possible, more unnatural than sentimental comedies."<sup>49</sup> They object to the "stoical resolution which makes men despise and disregard their misery . . . but is not sufficiently natural to excite our pity,"<sup>50</sup> and probably for that reason they dislike even imitations of the "noble soliloquy of Cato."<sup>51</sup> Another point is that the writers of tragedies must be consistent both as to characters and mood.<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, the reviewers look without disfavor on tragicomedy, which, they claim, is "not inconsistent with nature or the events of real life."<sup>53</sup>

Thus it makes no difference whether the ending of a tragedy be happy or unhappy.<sup>54</sup> In tragedy, however, some attention is to be paid to the unities.<sup>55</sup> The fable is to be probable,<sup>56</sup> and the incidents are to be worked up with symmetry in a regular gradation.<sup>57</sup> Sudden and unexpected reverses are to be used sparingly, since they are "always so critical as to be likewise full of improbability."<sup>58</sup> One of the results of this desire for order is seen in the *Critical's* rejection of oriental manners in tragedy.<sup>59</sup> The critics also regard length as a

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and cannot fail of affecting everyone, who has not outlived the better emotions of the soul, or sacrificed them at the Gothic altar of burlesque."

<sup>46</sup> XX (Oct., 1765), 331.

<sup>47</sup> V (June, 1758), 522.

<sup>48</sup> XLIV (Dec., 1777), 477.

<sup>49</sup> V (March, 1758), 237-38. And see Home's Introduction to his *Alonso* (London, 1773), p. iv.

<sup>50</sup> XLV (Feb., 1778), 154.

<sup>51</sup> XXXVII (May, 1774), 397.

<sup>52</sup> XXXVII (March, 1774), 212: "The diction is frequently bombast, and as often contemptibly vulgar." The soliloquy mentioned occurs in *Cato* V, i.

<sup>53</sup> LV (Feb., 1783), 151: "The introduction of comic characters into the tragedies of our early dramatists, has been considered as a sacrifice to the unpolished taste of the times. The cause no longer exists: the most successful of our modern tragedies are free from the unnatural intrusion of comedy and farce."

<sup>54</sup> LVII (March, 1784), 205. Lope de Vega, in the *Art of Writing Plays* (1609), says in this connection that "nature gives good examples of the mixed genre," while *The Rambler* (No. 156) speaks of tragicomedy with approval. Hugh Blair, however, is opposed to this "grotesque intermixture" (p. 530). *The Spectator* (No. 40) says that this combination is "one of the most monstrous inventions that ever entered into a poet's thoughts."

<sup>55</sup> See Hume, *Of Tragedy*; and Blair, p. 515.

<sup>56</sup> XX (Dec., 1765), 473.

<sup>57</sup> XXXV (March, 1773), 227; "and simple": IX (Feb., 1760), 133.

<sup>58</sup> XLVII (Feb., 1779), 157: "Though the outlines of this piece [Jephson's *The Law of Lombardy*] are formed upon the principles of the drama, it exhibits neither that symmetry nor regular gradation of well-arranged incidents, which is necessary in tragic composition. In some parts the pathos is extinguished. . . ." See also XXVIII (Sept., 1769), 232-33.

<sup>59</sup> XXXVII (March, 1774), 210.

<sup>60</sup> XXXVII (Jan., 1769), 80: "The attempt to introduce oriental manners into tragedy, has not, in this instance [Dowe's *Zingis*], been attended with . . . success . . . the novelty of the eastern names, &c. is in some places rather uncouth than entertaining . . . [it] cannot fail of affording the classical reader entertain-



requisite for tragedy,<sup>60</sup> although they do not go so far as Cooke<sup>61</sup> and lay down rules for the number of facts and the number of lines.

When we come to consider historical criticism of stage setting and costume, we find there is little concern with these details. Such incongruities as Cleopatra in hoop skirts or Caesar in tie and wig evidently did not bother either audience or critics. Thomas Wilkes,<sup>62</sup> however, in his *General View of the Stage* (1759), remarks that in plays dealing with noncontemporaries, more stress should be laid on historical accuracy; the *Critical* commends an author in whose novel (dealing with the court of Henry VIII) "the manners are such as correspond to the ideas of those times."<sup>63</sup> Further, the *Review* approves the use of stage characters based on actual people,<sup>64</sup> but allows the poet to "deviate from history to sustain the dignity of his hero."<sup>65</sup>

The only subject to be displayed on the stage is "the contention between pleasure and virtue," and the aim of the dramatist is "To supply virtue with argument . . . [which] will . . . always be necessary."<sup>66</sup> The *Critical*, vehemently denying that the stage is a "diabolical institution,"<sup>67</sup> upholds it as a "school of virtue."<sup>68</sup> Despite this exalted conception, however, the reviewers concede the necessity of appealing to the audience:

An English dramatic author, instead of consulting the judgment, must appeal to the imagination, the fancy, and the passions of his hearers . . . an English pit, naturally saturnine, must be stimulated with the business and agitation of the scene; with revolutions, recognitions, repartee, and altercation.<sup>69</sup>

They frequently inveigh against plays "entirely adapted to the upper galleries"<sup>70</sup> and lament the extreme use of stage business, intrigue, and garish splendor to appeal to this portion of the audience.<sup>71</sup>

But the *Review* did not totally neglect the reader of dramas as opposed to the spectator, and this is evident from its comments on closet drama. On the whole, the critics declined to reverse the decrees of

ment in the closet, however it may be calculated to please the spectator on the stage."

<sup>60</sup> LVIII (Aug., 1784), 137-38.

<sup>61</sup> *Elements of Dramatic Criticism* (London, 1775), p. 106.

<sup>62</sup> Quoted by G. C. D. Odell, *Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving* (New York, 1920), I, 452.

<sup>63</sup> XXXVII (Feb., 1774), 115.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. X (Oct., 1760), 321, where the author cites, among others, Shakespeare, Molière, Dryden, Pope, and Boileau, as precedents and authorities.

<sup>65</sup> XI (Jan., 1761), 30.

<sup>66</sup> XV (April, 1763), 314.

<sup>67</sup> XXIII (April, 1767), 318.

<sup>68</sup> XVI (Aug., 1763), 385.

<sup>69</sup> VII (June, 1759), 513.

<sup>70</sup> XXIII (Feb., 1767), 139-40.

<sup>71</sup> See I (March, 1756), 155; X (Aug., 1760), 155; XXX (Sept., 1770), 231; XXX (Dec., 1770), 445; XXXI (Jan., 1771), 71; XXXII (Nov., 1771), 392. In this connection the author of *Elfrida* says: "Incidents, Bustle, and business supply the place of simplicity, nature and pathos. Secret intrigues are the beauties of the modern stage." That this was not a new development is shown by Thomas Rymer, *Short View of Tragedy* (London, 1693), pp. 2-3.



audiences who had seen the plays acted, yet occasionally pieces are considered as "closet drama," a class which was to assume more importance during the following century. That the reviewers were conscious of the reprehensibility of such an attitude is suggested by their admission that "it may appear somewhat presumptuous to vindicate in the closet a piece which has been rejected in the theatre."<sup>72</sup> Earlier they had said, "In theatrical productions, there lies no appeal from public to critic,"<sup>73</sup> and had laid stress on the necessity of judging a play by performance.<sup>74</sup> This attitude is well summarized in the following statement:

The character of dramatic compositions is usually determined in the theatre rather than in the closet . . . the final appeal of the dramatic poet is to those mental feelings, that are common to the whole body of the spectators, and which, though more or less acute, in proportion to the degree of sensibility in different persons, are, however, universally excited by one general principle in human nature.<sup>75</sup>

Yet they were to become less severe as time went on until, in 1785, one reviewer writes, "We wish that authors would not confine their ambitions to the applause of the theatre, when they are able to command approval in the closet."<sup>76</sup> This attitude is interesting in view of the statement of Goldsmith, one of the contributors to the *Review*, in his *Enquiry into the Present State of Learning*:

The success of pieces upon the stage would be of little moment did it not influence the success of the same pieces in the closet . . . all must allow that the reader receives more benefit by perusing a well-written play, than by seeing it acted.<sup>77</sup>

Plays which were recommended by the *Critical* as closet drama are Glover's *Medea*,<sup>78</sup> tragedy; *The Fatal Falsehood*; the works of Crebillon; and *The Man of Family*. *The Monitor* and *The Siege of Aqueila* are mentioned<sup>79</sup> as equally good on the stage and in the closet; but Foote's *The Commissary* is considered<sup>80</sup> better on the

<sup>72</sup> XXXVI (Sept., 1773), 309.

<sup>73</sup> XXXVI (Dec., 1773), 476.

<sup>74</sup> IV (Nov., 1757), 468: "Very few dramatic performances have of late been favourably received, without first appearing on the stage. This is the criterion of merit with the generality of readers, who take it for granted, that the manager of a theater can have no reason but one for rejecting a new production."

<sup>75</sup> XXXIX (April, 1775), 310.

<sup>76</sup> LIX (Feb., 1785), 110. The necessity of criticizing plays from the standpoints of both reading them in the closet and seeing them acted on the stage is insisted upon in XXXI (Feb., 1771), 112. In XXVII (March, 1769), 220, a reviewer writes, "no sound judgment can be formed of it [i.e., a dramatic piece] till after the publication."

<sup>77</sup> Chap. XIII. And see Samuel Foote, *Taste*, 3rd ed. (London, 1765), Prologue.

<sup>78</sup> The reviews mentioned in this paragraph appear as follows: XII (Oct., 1761), 304; XLIX (Jan., 1780), 62; XXXVII (Feb., 1774), 157-58; XLIX (Jan., 1780), 60-62; XXV (April, 1768), 314; XXXI (May, 1771), 397.

<sup>79</sup> LI (March, 1781), 224.

<sup>80</sup> XX (July, 1765), 71. And see LI (March, 1781), 220-23; LI (April, 1781), 318.

stage. In the main, the practical attitude that plays are necessarily written for the theater rather than for reading was gradually losing ground, although even in 1785 "closet drama," as a genre, was not recognized.

We have seen that "common sense" was the keynote of the reviewers' attitude toward such general problems as the rules, historical accuracy, and closet drama. When we turn to their estimate of individual dramatists, we find the same to be true. Of the tragic writers who wrote before the mid-eighteenth century, Shakespeare was, of course, the most popular with both critics and public. Next in importance from the point of view of the *Critical* was Addison, whose *Cato* is considered far superior to the tragedies of Corneille,<sup>81</sup> although its hero is not a good example in the 1750's.<sup>82</sup> In 1764 Dryden, from whom Oliver Elton believes the century got its heritage of "unreal diction,"<sup>83</sup> is praised above all French dramatists;<sup>84</sup> but twenty years later we are told that "as a dramatist he is little known."<sup>85</sup> Two other writers of tragedy who are both praised and deprecated during this period are Otway, who "owed more to nature than to art,"<sup>86</sup> and Lee, whose *The Rival Queens* continued to please.<sup>87</sup> Other writers in this department were ignored, slighted,<sup>88</sup> or frowned upon.<sup>89</sup> The following exception is glaring to modern taste: "The genius of Savage, though imperfect, was certainly splendid and his productions at once deserve and request the attention of a careful editor."<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> XXX (July, 1770), 25: "The sterling lines of Addison are worth all the sing-song, tedious declamation of Corneille." XVII (Jan., 1764), 71: "the English stage, of which Mr. Addison's *Cato* is one of the greatest ornaments." See also XXII (July, 1766), 54.

<sup>82</sup> VII (Jan., 1759), 48.

<sup>83</sup> *Survey of English Literature, 1730-1780* (London, 1928), I, 130.

<sup>84</sup> XVII (Feb., 1764), 114.

<sup>85</sup> LVIII (July, 1784), 59: "Dryden, as a dramatic writer, is now little known, though he possesses great merit, blended perhaps with still greater faults. We know not a better field for a candid and discerning critic."

<sup>86</sup> LVIII (July, 1784), 60. But see IX (April, 1760), 306: "Poor Otway was obliged to conform to the times . . . the taste was then to introduce ghosts into every play. In his *Venice Preserved* he was resolved to indulge his audiences. . . . But surely such perversions of taste are not necessary now."

<sup>87</sup> LVIII (July, 1784), 60: "Indeed few spectators can see it well represented, without being whirled in the vortex of passion, to an utter insensibility of the absurdities of the piece."

<sup>88</sup> E.g., Southerne; see VIII (Dec., 1759), 480-86. He is mentioned on XXII (Dec., 1766), 426, without any evidence that he was known to the critic. A review of his *Plays* appears in XXXVIII (Nov., 1774), 392-93, where his wit and humor and "power of exciting the tender passions in tragedy" are approved despite the fact that he was "tainted with that licentiousness which was the taste of the age in which he flourished."

<sup>89</sup> E.g., Settle. See VIII (July, 1759), 7: "We cannot think that [Samuel] Butler could throw his eye so low as upon Settle."

<sup>90</sup> XLIII (Feb., 1777), 160. Could this review have been written, or influenced, by Samuel Johnson?

## JOYCE'S EPIPHANY AND BERGSON'S "L'INTUITION PHILOSOPHIQUE"

By SHIV K. KUMAR

Stuart Gilbert, in his essay "Art and Intuition," quotes Wildon Carr's definition of intuition as "an activity which characterises. It gives us a knowledge of things in their concreteness and individuality."<sup>1</sup> This concept of intuition as a mysterious faculty of knowing objects seems to correspond, in certain respects, with what Stephen Dedalus designates as "epiphany." He mentions it as the third attribute of beauty, synonymous with *claritas*.

"After the analysis which discovers the second quality," Stephen explains to his friend Cranly,<sup>2</sup>

the mind makes the only logically possible synthesis and discovers the third quality. This is the moment which I call epiphany. First we recognise that the object is *one* integral thing, then we recognise that it is an organised composite structure, a *thing* in fact: finally, when the relation of the parts is exquisite, when the parts are adjusted to the special point, we recognise that it is *that* thing which it is. Its soul, its whatness, leaps to us from the vestment of its appearance. The soul of the commonest object, the structure of which is so adjusted, seems to us radiant. The object achieves its epiphany.<sup>3</sup>

On a closer analysis, this concept of epiphany seems to suggest, in many respects, Bergson's "l'intuition philosophique" which enables us to have an instantaneous apprehension of an object.<sup>4</sup> Epiphany and intuition may, however, appear to differ from each other in two respects: first, whereas the former is a phenomenon, the latter is a faculty; second, whereas epiphany is the outcome of *integritas* and *consonantia*, intuition implies, on the other hand, an immediate identification with the image or object without any intermediary stages. But on further examination even this apparent difference becomes insignificant. If an object "achieves its epiphany," it is only in the mind of the beholder who perceives it in an intuitive flash. And even Bergson recognizes, however grudgingly, in his concept of intuition "une imprégnation graduelle" or an "effort préalable" before "la complication diminue. Puis les parties entrent les unes dans les autres. Enfin tout se ramasse en un point unique. . . ."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stuart Gilbert, "Art and Intuition," *Transition*, No. 21 (March, 1932), p. 217. Dr. Carr is referred to in this article as the translator of Benedetto Croce's famous book *Logica*. He is also, it may be mentioned here, one of the most distinguished exponents of Bergson's thought.

<sup>2</sup> In *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* this theory of "Esthetic" is expounded to Lynch; in *Stephen Hero* to Cranly. I have used the second edition in the Travellers' Library Series (London, 1950).

<sup>3</sup> James Joyce, *Stephen Hero*, ed. Theodore Spencer (London, 1950), p. 190.

<sup>4</sup> "Car si l'intuition nous conduit à l'intérieure de la vie . . . et coïncider avec l'élan vital. . . ." Albert Thibaudet, *Le Bergsonisme* (Paris, 1923), p. 57.

<sup>5</sup> Bergson, "L'Intuition Philosophique," *La Pensée et le Mouvant* (Paris, 1934), pp. 118, 119. First delivered as a lecture at the Bologne Conference, April 10, 1911.

The emphasis, however, in both cases is on the sudden revelation of an unexpected aspect of an object or experience. In the words of the narrator, "by an epiphany he meant a *sudden spiritual manifestation*, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a memorable phase of the mind itself."<sup>6</sup> Since art is based on such unexpected revelations of character and situation, Stephen Dedalus deduces the role of every writer to be the recording of "these epiphanies with extreme care, seeing that they themselves are the most delicate and evanescent of moments."<sup>7</sup> Stephen then proceeds to emphasize the importance of these sudden manifestations. In the course of a mental journey to Aunt Sara's, his stream of consciousness assumes the form of an imaginary conversation with his uncle who reminds him of his old habit of registering epiphanies:

Remember your epiphanies on green oval leaves, deeply deep, copies to be sent if you died to all the great libraries of the world, including Alexandria? Someone was to read them there after a few thousand years, a mahamanvantara. Pico della Mirandola like.<sup>8</sup>

Dr. Gogarty also narrates an incident in his autobiography when, in the course of an evening in a "snug" with Joyce, the latter begged to be excused and left the company.

I don't mind being reported [writes Gogarty], but to be an unwilling contributor to one of his Epiphanies is irritating.

Probably Father Darlington had taught him, as an aside in his Latin class—for Joyce knew no Greek—that "Epiphany" meant "a showing forth." So he recorded under "Epiphany" any showing forth of the mind by which he considered one gave oneself away.<sup>9</sup>

This concept of epiphany does not remain an abstract notion in the mind of Young Dedalus but assumes a concrete form when he tries to substantiate his theory with illustrations from his personal experience. One misty evening, when he is walking through Eccles' Street, brooding over the attitude of women toward religion as being a mixture of cowardice and fear, he suddenly overhears a snatch of conversation between a young gentleman and a young woman.

The Young Lady—(drawing discreetly) . . . O, Yes . . . I was . . . at the . . . cha . . . pel. . .

The Young Gentleman—(inaudibly) . . . I . . . (again inaudibly) . . . I . . .

The Young Lady—(softly) . . . O . . . but you're . . . ve . . . ry . . . wick . . . ed. . .<sup>10</sup>

On hearing these words, a sudden revelation of the essence of what he had been thinking for a long time dawns within his consciousness.

<sup>6</sup> *Stephen Hero*, p. 188. Italics mine.

<sup>7</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>8</sup> James Joyce, *Ulysses*, third reprint, Bodley Head (London, 1947), p. 37.

<sup>9</sup> Oliver Gogarty, *As I Was Going Down Sackville Street* (London, 1937), Chap. XXII, p. 285. Joseph Prescott observes, "It seems as likely that Joyce got this information from Skeat's 'Etymological Dictionary,' which according to MS., p. 527, the autobiographical Stephen 'read by the hour.'" *James Joyce's "Ulysses" as a Work in Progress*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Harvard University, 1944), p. 295.

<sup>10</sup> *Stephen Hero*, p. 188.

This moment of sudden "showing forth" he calls epiphany. The second instance cited by him is of the Ballast Office Clock which, in a moment of epiphany, acquires new significance: glimpses at that clock will then appear to be "the gropings of a spiritual eye which seeks to adjust its vision to an exact focus."<sup>11</sup>

This theory of epiphany, it may further be seen, also seems to parallel Virginia Woolf's notion of reality as revealing itself in unexpected visionary flashes. In a central passage in *A Room of One's Own*, she elaborates her theory of what may be called "evanescent reality":

What is meant by "reality"? It would seem to be something very erratic, very undependable—now to be found in a dusty road, now in a scrap of newspaper in the street, now a daffodil in the sun. It lights up a group in a room and stamps some casual saying. It overwhelms one walking home beneath the stars and makes the silent world more real than the world of speech—and then there it is again in an omnibus in the uproar of Piccadilly. Sometimes, too, it seems to dwell in shapes too far away for us to discern what their nature is. But whatever it touches, it fixes and makes permanent. That is what remains over when the skin of the day has been cast into the hedge; that is what is left of past time and of our loves and hates. Now the writer, as I think, has the chance to live more than other people in the presence of this reality. It is his business to find it and collect it and communicate it to the rest of us.<sup>12</sup>

And among the outstanding examples of this view of reality, she includes *A la recherche du temps perdu* which stresses the importance of intuition in creative writing. It is, therefore, easy to recognize a certain correspondence between Virginia Woolf's "evanescent reality," Proust's "intuition," and Bergson's "l'intuition philosophique."

Joyce, therefore, by using a new term has unnecessarily introduced an element of ambiguity, for epiphany in many respects parallels intuition. In the *Portrait*, Stephen Dedalus drops this term altogether and uses its more familiar form, intuition. It is through an intuitional awareness that Stephen hopes some day to apprehend reality in a flash of aesthetic vision: "He wanted to meet in the real world the unsubstantial image which his soul so constantly beheld. He did not know where to seek it or how, but a premonition which led him on told him that this image would, without any overt act of his, encounter him."<sup>13</sup> And in "that magic moment," he would be completely transformed. That this intuitional moment bears a certain resemblance to an

<sup>11</sup> *Idem*. Cf.: "Such a sudden intimation was experienced by Marcel Proust, when he had dipped a bit of *madeleine* into a cup of linden tea." Harry Levin, *James Joyce* (1941), p. 28. "What is Joycean 'epiphany' after all," observes another critic, "but the equivalent of a Crocean 'moment of expression'? You see a clock daily; but at last you 'intuit' it. So Joyce. . . ." Geddes MacGregor, "Artistic Theory in James Joyce," *Life and Letters*, Vol. 54 (1947), p. 21. W. Y. Tindall also suggests a resemblance between Joyce's "epiphany" and Baudelaire's concept of "symbol." Baudelaire, he quotes, believed that in "certain almost supernatural states of soul the depth of life is revealed in ordinary everyday happenings. Ordinary life then becomes the Symbol." *Forces in Modern British Literature* (New York, 1949), p. 278.

<sup>12</sup> Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (London, 1929), pp. 165-66.

<sup>13</sup> James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, p. 73. First published in 1916.

epiphanic showing forth of reality may be seen from another extract from the *Portrait*. Stephen has been brooding over "the essence of beauty," while his mind is wrapped in disquieting thoughts:

His thinking was a dusk of doubt and selfmistrust, lit up at moments by *the lightnings of intuition*, but lightnings of so clear a splendour that in those moments the world perished about his feet as if it had been fire-consumed; and thereafter his tongue grew heavy and he met the eyes of others with unanswering eyes, for he felt that the spirit of beauty had folded him round like a mantle and that in revery at least he had been acquainted with nobility.<sup>14</sup>

These "lightnings of intuition" seem to represent Stephen's earlier concept of epiphany, and in this sense embrace every transcendental awareness of phenomena. Such moments are obviously transitory<sup>15</sup> ("little daily miracles, illuminations, matches struck unexpectedly in the dark," reflects Lily Briscoe<sup>16</sup>), and an artist who could remain in a perpetual state of intuitive perception would be such as the world has never yet seen.

These epiphanies or flashes of intuition hold up, as it were, certain moments out of the flowing stream of experience for a more intense apprehension. These are moments of unexpected spiritual awakening, moments which enable the mind to transcend all reason and perceive phenomena in a new perspective. They embody the same principle of literary composition which, in Bergson's words, enables a novelist to conceive a character "all at once, in its entirety,"<sup>17</sup> and present it "in its flowing through time."<sup>18</sup> Art, observes Bergson, is itself the outcome of such sudden and direct revelations of reality, implying a virginal "purity of perception" which reaches its culmination only in moments of epiphany.<sup>19</sup> Buried under the thick layer of "habit or action," lie dormant such moments of sudden "showing forth" over which reason has no control.

The slow progress of mankind [says Bergson in *Laughter*] in the direction of an increasingly peaceful social life has gradually consolidated this layer, just as the life of our planet itself has been one long effort to cover with a cool and solid crust the fiery mass of seething metals. But volcanic eruptions occur.<sup>20</sup>

Of precisely such volcanic nature are "epiphanies" or intuitive "eruptions," which reveal to the novelist a vision of reality not otherwise apprehensible.

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<sup>14</sup> Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist*, pp. 200-201. Italics mine.

<sup>15</sup> The transitoriness of "the lightnings of intuition" is also referred to by Bergson in *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (London, 1913), p. 282: "These fleeting intuitions, which light up their object only at distant intervals. . . . It is a lamp . . . which only glimmers now and then, for a few moments at most."

<sup>16</sup> Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, eighth impression (London, 1949), p. 249.

<sup>17</sup> Bergson, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. T. E. Hulme (London, 1913), p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>19</sup> Bergson, *Laughter*, trans. Brereton and Rothwell (London, 1911), p. 159.

<sup>20</sup> *Idem.*

EMERSON AND BOEHME  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN MYSTICAL IDEAS

By LIONEL BRAHAM

Ralph Waldo Emerson's published attitude toward the strain of mysticism represented by Jacob Boehme is a curiously inconsistent one. In the essay "The Poet," he finds that

Mysticism consists in the mistake of an accidental and individual symbol for an universal one. The morning-redness happens to be the favorite meteor to the eyes of Jacob Behmen, and comes to stand to him for truth and faith; and, he believes, should stand for the same realities to every reader.<sup>1</sup>

Emerson here strikes at the dogmatism of the mystic (of whom Boehme was the arch-exemplar) which repelled him as much in Boehme as when he met it in Swedenborg.

To Emerson, it was the fault of mystics like Boehme that they sought to impose their vision of the ideal upon symbols that were necessarily transitory and various in meaning; hence, in striving for the universal they achieved only the parochial. The anomaly of Emerson's position arises from his having gone to school to the mystics whose rigidity he chastised for the spirit, if not the letter, of the mysticism he adopted as lore in much of his writing. Together they share an anti-materialistic bias. But the same independence of mind that turned Emerson from the straight and narrow of Unitarianism moved him to reject the too rapt and literal construction of allegorical truth of which he sometimes found his mystical precursors guilty.

Emerson might lump Boehme with George Fox (in "Nature," Second Series) as a prophet infatuated with his prophecy, but the inspired shoemaker seems nevertheless to have exercised a fascination upon the skeptical Yankee philosopher. The influence of Boehme on Emerson is traceable in explicit mention as well as in ideological similarities. But the latter do not always provide an adequate basis for attributing influence. For while both Emerson and Boehme seem at times Neoplatonic in their mysticism, their sources of inspiration differ. Emerson's lie in the Neoplatonism to which he turned as an alternative to the orthodox Christianity of his youth; Boehme's, apart from a unique personal vision, in a naïve involvement with the school of Paracelsus. Moreover, in some cases the doctrines thus derived have been compounded with other philosophies, making it difficult to separate the original intellectual constituents. Nevertheless, Emerson assimilated

<sup>1</sup> *Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Boston and New York, 1903-32), III, 34.



those examples of mystical experience in Boehme which could reinforce his own theories and prejudices.

Emerson's ideational link with Boehme may be approached through "The Over-Soul," the essay that illustrates perhaps most clearly his commitment to the Neoplatonic kind of mysticism which Boehme colored with the hues of his visionary inspiration. Emerson here specifies the quality of the spiritual principle he posited in "The Transcendentalist," but acknowledges that in its more ecstatic manifestations, such as Boehme's "Aurora," it is attended by a bent toward insanity. Yet in "The Transcendentalist" he had stressed the transcendental belief in inspiration, ecstasy, and miracle. The divine mind reveals its presence to Emerson much as it did to Boehme, by an influx of the light of the divine into the individual mind, often attended by "enthusiasm" or prophetic fervor, although the latter traits are typical of Boehme rather than of Emerson. The concept of the "Over-Soul" itself originates in the "emanation theory" of Plotinus, reflecting later mysticism and the "inner light" of the Quakers.<sup>2</sup>

Both Emerson and Boehme thought of God as dwelling at once within and without man. It was man's unique function to serve as a conduit for the forces of divinity and to recognize the manifestations of the divine in the universe about him. As a theosophist, Boehme longed for union with God in a way alien to that of the more sophisticated Emerson. For Emerson's philosophy ultimately was secular, while Boehme's was sacred. Yet Emerson's apprehension of the deity is often surprisingly akin to Boehme's. Like a good Transcendentalist, Emerson sees God within man: "the Highest dwells with him . . . the sources of nature are in his own mind."<sup>3</sup> How similar this is to the question Boehme puts in his *Confessions*: "Where will you seek for God? Seek him in your soul that is proceeded out of the eternal nature."<sup>4</sup> The parallelism indicates Emerson's and Boehme's common feeling that man must find God within himself. Both tended to see man as mediator between the inward and outward realms of spirit.

Emerson defined his "Over-Soul" as a unity which contained and united every man's individual being. But instead of the union with God for which Boehme hungered, Emerson emphasized right living and doing as appropriate obeisance. His mysticism, therefore, is ethically rather than theosophically oriented. Boehme felt that the mind had turned away from unity with God in a desire for experience, thus instilling that evil within, which now governed the mind. It could not be set free until, by muting its own will, it merged once more with God. The "perfect stillness" into which Boehme felt the will must lift itself to be liberated may seem to correspond to the "wise silence" of which Emerson speaks in "The Over-Soul." But Emerson's is the divine essence, the transcendental expression of God

<sup>2</sup> Frederic I. Carpenter, Introduction to *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, American Writers Series (New York, 1934), p. xxix.

<sup>3</sup> *Complete Works*, II, 294.

<sup>4</sup> *Confessions of Jacob Boehme*, ed. W. Scott Palmer (New York, 1920), p. 48.



which lurks within every man, uniting the discrete particles of external reality in one soul, rather than Boehme's taming of the will so that it may articulate with the will of God. Emerson was too much of a vitalist to countenance wholly Boehme's ascetic ideal. He preaches cognizance of the divine essence within as an incitement to the moral sense and earthly wisdom, not heavenly repose.

Yet Emerson's works furnish evidence that his temperament was not without its strain of quietism. Noting the "undescribable presence . . . our rightful lord" dwelling within man, he proclaims, "we are not to do, but to let do; not to work, but to be worked upon."<sup>5</sup> But his insistent worldliness seems to have overcome the momentary twinges of the otherworldly, which bind him to the passivity of Boehme as well as to that of the Eastern thinkers with whose thought he was not unfamiliar.

Despite his flagellation of Boehme for his narrowly allegorical interpretation of natural phenomena, Emerson thought of nature as emblematic. "Every natural fact," he tells us explicitly, "is a symbol of some spiritual fact."<sup>6</sup> Moreover, Emerson extends his theory to include the dependence of language upon nature and the relation of visible nature to the thoughts of humans. In this connection, it may be worthy of note that Boehme intuitively apprehended the link of thought or spirit to nature. It is said that when he first heard the Greek word "Idea," he exclaimed, "I see a pure and heavenly maiden!"<sup>7</sup> In Boehme's view, then, the word "Idea" was to be equated with "Sophia," the personified archetype of divine wisdom he relied on to lead him to God.

Boehme, like Emerson, felt that man and external nature were alike divinely inspired. He who recognized his innate divinity would be able to see that nature was also divinely animated and that it mirrored the contention within his own soul between the forces of goodness and those of evil. In his *Signatura Rerum* Boehme sees God's signature written large over nature; the whole visible universe is invested with the divine spirit. Thus Boehme espouses a pantheism akin to Emerson's in "The Rhodora": "The self-same Power that brought me there brought you." But Boehme's insight both into the microcosm of man and the macrocosm of the outside world was fuller in recognizing the presence of evil as well as good. Emerson's melioristic optimism seems to have blurred his vision of evil. Possibly Emerson failed to acknowledge the potency of evil because it would have fettered man and hindered the development of that "self-reliance" Emerson desired of him.<sup>8</sup>

Emerson did not cavil at the "enthusiasm" of Boehme and Swedenborg; rather, it was this trait that drew him to them, once he had left

<sup>5</sup> *Complete Works*, VI, 213.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 26.

<sup>7</sup> *Confessions*, Introduction, p. xviii.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen E. Whicher, *Freedom and Fate: An Inner Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Philadelphia, 1953), p. 46.

the constricting Unitarian fold. But he did not wish to substitute one orthodoxy for another, nor, like Boehme and Swedenborg, to be guided by the canons of historical Christianity. To Emerson, the moral sentiment was all and the ritual unimportant; hence, his feeling that Boehme and Swedenborg both failed in structuring their mystic visions about the Christian symbol instead of the moral sentiment, "which carries innumerable christianities, humanities, divinities, in its bosom."<sup>9</sup>

But Emerson's rejection of orthodox miracle and ritual may have inclined him to the naïve Boehme, for all his omens and amulets, rather than the dour Swedenborg. Emerson preferred Boehme's simple sincerity to Swedenborg's bloodless didacticism: "Behmen is healthily and beautifully wise, notwithstanding the mystical narrowness and incommunicableness. Swedenborg is disagreeably wise, and with all his accumulated gifts, paralyzes and repels."<sup>10</sup> Moreover, as a poet Emerson was attracted by the strangely poetic strain in Boehme's literary temperament: "Once 'the rose of Sharon perfumed our graves,' as Behmen said: but now, if a man dies, it is like a grave dug in the snow."<sup>11</sup> It was to the untutored vision of the ideal that Emerson looked for hope, not the austerity of a new discipline which could only remind him of the Calvinism he had forsworn.

Emerson followed Boehme in the Protestant position that mystical vision was attainable in this world, contrary to the Catholic tenet that the Beatific Vision could be achieved only after death.<sup>12</sup> As a result, Emerson thought man capable of perfection during his earthly tenure. He parted from Boehme in stressing the mystical idea rather than the mystical experience. The former was of value in furnishing one with perceptions of the good life and moral perfection as this-worldly desiderata, but it would not do, Emerson felt, for man to allow supernaturalism to inundate his rationality. To Emerson, what was supernatural was unnatural, and the pragmatism to which his mysticism was allied moved him to feel that although man lived by the ideal, he ought not to live in it. Contrarily, whatever pragmatic needs Boehme's mysticism served, these were swallowed in the hope of a supernatural salvation.

For while Emerson came to mysticism for the insight it afforded into the governance of human life, Boehme was so ensnared by the ecstasy of direct communication with God that he looked to it as a harbinger of salvation in the next world. With worried side glances at the falls of Lucifer and Adam, he exhorted men to strive for salvation with the same fear and trembling that moved him. The urgency with which Boehme groped for God seems closer to that of St. Augustine—who also wrote *Confessions*—than to the cold Greek rationality of Emerson. In their concern for self-knowing through the heart

<sup>9</sup> *Complete Works*, IV, 135.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 334 n.

<sup>12</sup> Frederic I. Carpenter, *Emerson Handbook* (New York, 1953), pp. 115-16.

rather than the head, for the purgation of the soul's inward unease by relation to God, Boehme and Augustine seem to foreshadow trends of thought and feeling within the modern movement of Existentialism.

This definition of the similarities and differences in the mystical ideas of Emerson and Boehme compels affirmation that Emerson was as much a son of the Enlightenment as Boehme was of the Reformation. Eighteenth-century rationalism had intervened between the simple piety of Boehme and the skepticism of Emerson and made Emerson reject the historical Christianity Boehme accepted uncritically. Emerson secularized salvation, substituting salvation through reason for that of the supernatural. In his *Divinity School Address* he put nature in the place of revelation as a source of belief. In his hands faith became reason, and grace, nature.<sup>13</sup> Thus Emerson rejected the diction as well as the dogma of orthodox Christianity. Religion without the moral sense was impotent, a meaningless mythos. For Emerson's thought was shaped by the "moral science" of the Enlightenment, not by the theology of the Reformation. And although he traveled the mystic way with Boehme, he changed course when it threatened to become a creed. No ritual could be permitted to obscure the proper study: man.

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<sup>13</sup> Whicher, p. 180.

## ERASMUS A. DARWIN, FRIEND OF THOMAS AND JANE CARLYLE

By GRACE J. CALDER

In a group of twelve unpublished letters to Mrs. Hensleigh Wedgwood, Erasmus Alvey Darwin (1804-1881) gives glimpses of his friends Thomas and Jane Carlyle and also reveals his own personality. These unpretentious letters add to the library of impressions of the Carlyles left by their contemporaries and supplement the characterization of Darwin drawn by the Carlyles. So far, reciprocal portraiture in the usual way. But if the study be allowed to run its course, Darwin's kinsmen come into the story. They too write of Erasmus Darwin and of Carlyle's portrayal of him. Instead of remaining in the footnotes, they insist on mounting the stage with the main actors. And when they do so, the outlines of a Great Family begin to stand out. Across the generations, the members of the Darwin and Wedgwood families have made their cultural contributions to England partly through the advantage of belonging to an eminent family. Carlyle, on the other hand, struggled alone and remained the only famous member of his family. The story of the friendship of Carlyle and the Darwins incidentally points the contrast between the Great Family and the Great Man, and comparison lends fresh meaning to the achievement of each.

Major Leonard Darwin (1850-1943), the fourth son of Charles Darwin, kindly found for me copies of twelve letters of his uncle and secured permission to publish extracts from them. So far as I know, only five scattered letters written by Erasmus Darwin have hitherto been published or even quoted in part.<sup>1</sup> Major Darwin was the "Uncle Lenny" fondly described by Gwen Raverat in her gay reminiscences entitled *Period Piece*<sup>2</sup> and by Bernard Darwin in his autobiography, *The World That Fred Made*.<sup>3</sup> Major Darwin cared greatly for Dar-

<sup>1</sup> A fragment of a letter in the MS of *Past and Present* (Calder, *The Writing of "Past and Present"* [New Haven, 1949], p. 17); a letter to Mrs. Hensleigh Wedgwood in 1852 (see below, n. 42) and two notes to his niece Henrietta Darwin in 1871 (*Emma Darwin: A Century of Family Letters, 1792-1896*, ed. Henrietta Litchfield [London, 1915], II, 149, 203); a letter to Charles Darwin in 1859 (*Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, ed. Francis Darwin [London, 1887], II, 233).

<sup>2</sup> (New York, 1953), pp. 195-203. For genealogical charts of the Darwins and Wedgwoods, see Raverat and *Emma Darwin*, I.

<sup>3</sup> (London, 1955), pp. 40-41, 45-52. He writes: "there can be no pleasanter relationship than that between nephews and nieces, uncles and aunts. . . . My grandfather's bachelor brother, Uncle Ras, who had taken Mrs Carlyle about in his cab, had been a magnificent tipper of his nephews; my father remembered the difficulty of pretending not to see when the great moment was coming. The only time I went to his house I was too young for a tip, but I was sent down to the dining-room in charge of the butler to eat scrumptious white grapes. My two childless uncles, Uncle William and Uncle Leonard, certainly carried on this glorious tradition" (pp. 40-41).

winiana. Some of the photographs and records now exhibited at Down, the country home of Charles Darwin, attest to his special interest in family archives. He not only had access to copies of his uncle's letters but also sent with them the following sketch of his "Uncle Ras":

Erasmus Alvey Darwin b. 1804 d. 1881 was my father, Charles Robert Darwin's eldest and only brother. The name Erasmus had been for long in the family, Erasmus Earle (1590-1667. See Dic of Nat. Biog) having been an ancestor. Dr. Erasmus Darwin (see also Dic of Nat. Biog), whose name is often coupled with that of Lamarck, was Erasmus Alvey's grandfather. The character of E A D is described by my father, and also by my cousin Miss Wedgwood, in *Life & Letters of Charles Darwin* (Murray 1888) p. 21 & 23 of Vol I. He is alluded to in *Emma Darwin* (my mother) *A Century of Family Letters*. (Murray). Sismondi compares E A D with Carlyle in 1840, to Carlyle's disadvantage! My sister, Mrs. Litchfield, who edited this book, discusses Carlyle's description of E. A. D rather critically. This book contains several allusions to Carlyle, but none others likely, I think, to be of interest to you. My uncle had bad health, one lung, I believe, being badly affected. I remember that he told me that he always expected to die young, and implied that this made it seem little worth while trying to do anything. He never married, and lived in a house in London nearly all his life. He had a carriage, and often drove out Mrs. Carlyle. I think she was his friend, rather than Carlyle, though Carlyle came to see him after his wife's death, often, I believe. After Froude's publications about the unhappy relationship between Carlyle and his wife, I remember his saying to me that all he could say was that he saw nothing of it, this with a pained look on his face. My uncle was not a very good letter writer, but was remarkably pleasant in company, without being what would be called a brilliant conversationalist.<sup>4</sup>

The letters here presented were written from London, probably between 1837 and 1851, to "Fanny"—Frances Mackintosh Wedgwood (1800-1889), daughter of Sir James Mackintosh and wife of Erasmus Darwin's cousin Hensleigh Wedgwood (1803-1891). Erasmus and Hensleigh were grandsons of Josiah Wedgwood of Etruria. Hensleigh and Fanny were cousins, as were Hensleigh's sister Emma and her husband Charles Darwin. The Hensleigh Wedgwoods lived in Clapham.<sup>5</sup>

Fanny made a congenial correspondent for Erasmus Darwin, for she was an engaging person. At sixteen she won the admiration of her future mother-in-law, Mrs. Josiah Wedgwood II.<sup>6</sup> In 1827 Marianne Thornton, her neighbor, praised her highly in a letter to Hannah More.<sup>7</sup> In 1852 a friend wrote, "Everybody speaks and knows what an agreeable woman Mrs. Hensleigh Wedgwood is."<sup>8</sup> Erasmus Darwin took special delight in the children of Hensleigh and Fanny, and in his letters mentions the three oldest of the six: "Snow"—Frances Julia (1833-1913); "Bro"—James Mackintosh (1834-1864); and

<sup>4</sup> March 20, 1931.

<sup>5</sup> *Emma Darwin*, I, 215, 243.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 94, 222.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 186-87. See also E. M. Forster, *Marianne Thornton* (London, 1956), p. 216.

<sup>8</sup> *Emma Darwin*, II, 146.

"Erny" or "Tim"—Ernest Hensleigh (1839-1898). "His house (6, Queen Anne Street)," writes Henrietta Darwin Litchfield, "was a second home to his nephews and nieces, including in this term his dearest of all, the children of Hensleigh Wedgwood."<sup>9</sup>

By 1838 Erasmus Darwin had become fairly well acquainted with Carlyle. Early that year he and Harriet Martineau and Miss Wilson hired a lecture room in Portman Square for Carlyle's lectures on the history of European literature. From this time on, the Carlyles, the Wedgwoods, Erasmus and sometimes Charles Darwin dined together as friends. Fanny would naturally enjoy whatever reports Erasmus could give of the Carlyles.<sup>10</sup>

Darwin's letters show that he lived in two worlds, in neither of which he considered himself a central figure. He belonged to the small but well-populated world of the Darwin-Wedgwood family and to the world of the Victorian intellectuals in which these families had an assured position. The topics on which he touches include the moving about of various members of the family on holiday outings or family visits—to Eastbourne, to Shrewsbury, to Down in Kent<sup>11</sup> ("Nature abhors a journey of sixteen miles as much as a vacuum," he wrote); accounts of the young: new babies born, measles and colds, and mammas ready to stone any mother approaching with a "pariah" child who might expose their offspring; his own charming entertainment of children;<sup>12</sup> drinking tea with a pair of lovers who have "youth beauty six thousand a year and nothing but a few obstacles wanting"; and, in contrast, the loneliness of a bachelor's homecoming.

With these domesticities he mixes in the popular novels of the day—*Violet, or the Danseuse*, G. H. Lewes' *Rose and Blanche*, Hahn Hahn's *Sigismund*,<sup>13</sup> and *Vanity Fair*; his "indulging" in a Friday lecture by the Master of Trinity (Faraday) before Lady Lyell; Babbage's attempt to impose theological tests on London University; mesmerism; his association with the Unitarians and the latest book of the "priestess" Harriet Martineau.<sup>14</sup>

Playfulness tinged with irony permeates his letters, as it marked his conversation. He reports as the lark of the week his going out to select a quiet lodging in the Kensal Green cemetery. Writing of children, he evokes the tender mood of "Dream Children." Whether

<sup>9</sup> *Emma Darwin*, II, 148, 96.

<sup>10</sup> D. A. Wilson, *Carlyle on Cromwell and Others* (London, 1924), pp. 25, 28; *Emma Darwin*, I, 287; II, 13, 21, 31; *Letters of Jane Welsh Carlyle to her Family*, ed. Leonard Huxley (London, 1924), p. 217.

<sup>11</sup> See Raverat, Chap. 8; also British Association for the Advancement of Science, *Historical and Descriptive Catalogue of the Darwin Memorial at Down House, Downe, Kent* (n.d.).

<sup>12</sup> *Emma Darwin*, I, 142; II, 66, 96, 148-49.

<sup>13</sup> On these novels see *Emma Darwin*, I, 276; *Letters of J. W. C. to her Family*, p. 152.

<sup>14</sup> Undoubtedly *Letters on the Laws of Man's Social Nature and Development* (with H. G. Atkinson, 1851). See *Emma Darwin*, II, 129. The reference is found in the one letter sent by Major Darwin containing no mention of the Carlyles: the twelfth and latest, written probably in 1851 or after.

he feels "as dull and dry as the best of Egyptians mummies" or "rather man about townish" without Fanny "to take the shine out" of him, he writes "with the most bigotted attachment." Family expressions, such as "anything being good enough to wear at Maer" or "Youth on the prow and Pleasure at the helm," the latter traditional even with Gwen Raverat,<sup>15</sup> give the letters a homely quality.

The earliest letter of the group is printed in full as a specimen. Next, in chronological order as nearly as can be determined, appear the excerpts from the other letters. Each passage consists of Darwin's complete comment on the Carlyles. (The twelfth, and latest, letter contains no mention of the Carlyles, so it is not quoted here.)

## I

[1836 or 1837?]

My dear Fanny,

William brought me your list of Commissions yesterday just as I was setting out to a haymaking party at Waterloo,<sup>16</sup> and said they must go out that evening by the mail. I stated my case to him, but for some time he was strict upon the point, and I hope you will suffer no inconvenience by the delay. I hope to execute them all properly, tho' I must confess I feel rather low about the muslin and cambric edges as I have never yet been able to learn the difference between those substances. The day at Waterloo was a blank. Lady A.<sup>17</sup> and all her generation were there and as she voted it dangerous to sit in the hayfield I had to console myself for two mortal hours in the garden with a select little seraglio eating oranges and drinking tea, with the occasional diversion of looking over the wall at the Miss Edlins in their hayfield. The evening limped horribly, the whole time being apparently spent in preparations to go look for bonnets and so forth. The only amusement was a note from H. Taylor,<sup>18</sup> the most sublime and frozen composition that any poet ever yet wrote. Mrs. M. was properly grateful to you for all the pretty things which I wrote that I was to write but which I did not write, all of which she sends back with interest.

The great and only event in my life since your departure has been a call upon Thomas Carlyle which I accomplished very ingeniously. Wrightson, who is just come back from abroad, had a diploma from some society to deliver to him, and I volunteered to drive him there in order to take the chances, which proved favourable. Thomas himself was out but Mrs. Carlyle apparently nothing loath to receive morning visitors insisted upon Wrightson waiting till he came home and invited me in, and in this manner we waited about a quarter of an hour, Mrs. C. mistaking Wrightson all the time for a German and talking about his countryman Dr. Julius, Dr. Hitze and divers others. I was beginning to wonder how all this would come to an end, when Thomas made his appearance looking very much like any other Scotchman except that he wore a green hat the size of a small umbrella. Dear Mrs. Thomas turned out a divine little woman, she came and seated herself in the window almost immediately behind me, so that to speak to her I had to turn my back to Thomas. She kept up one unceasing chatter for nearly an hour, discoursing about Craigputtock [*sic*] and everything else in the world, and it was only at rare intervals that I could distinguish that Wrightson

<sup>15</sup> *Period Piece*, p. 110.

<sup>16</sup> "Waterloo" may be incorrectly copied.

<sup>17</sup> Possibly Lady Alderston (Georgiana Drewe, cousin to Fanny). See *Emma Darwin*, I, xxii.

<sup>18</sup> Henry Taylor, clerk in the Colonial Office and man of letters, also helped Carlyle arrange his lectures of 1837 and 1838. Wilson, pp. 4, 25.



was going at full speed upon his hobby, the Punishment of Death.<sup>19</sup> It is absurd after going to see him, but I really don't think I should be able to recognize him in the street if he should not have his green hat on. I longed most sincerely to have had you there to set him discoursing. It was too bad hearing nothing but commonplace and common English. I send you the Bill of the Philharmonic and with some degree of malice. I feel sure that the *Morning Post* must have had a bad heart to sneer at the "virgin vezzosa" in the way it did. You will perhaps console yourself by seeing Herz's name, but even he was not quite so intolerable as usual.

Infinite love to Snow, and to all others in proper proportion not even omitting Bro.

Yours very truly,  
E. D.

You will think I have been acting on the principle of anything being good enough to wear at Maer<sup>20</sup> by the form of the gossip I send you when you ask what is going on.

Mr. Waugh had no lemonade so you must put up with Savoy's [?] which I dare say is much better. I have not sent your veil as it would be much too smart for the country.

## II

[184?]

I had pretty nearly a tete-a-tete with Carlyle on Sunday what with Jenny being entirely done up by her previous night with Lily<sup>21</sup> and what with putting her to bed.

I found he had read Mill so, that what was not self-evident to him he considered to be a "ghastly phantasm" and seemed quite perplexed why people on every side would bring forward these phantasms against his regimented labour. It was amusing to hear Lily repeating some of his strings of phrases. I don't think he would be able to endure what he calls the foolishness part of mankind very long.

## III

[184?]

I went yesterday with Carlyle to the Elgin marbles, his first sight of them, and he did not talk any very great nonsense—the only discovery he made was a resemblance between Nero and Sir Robert Inglis and certainly the lower part of the face is like.<sup>22</sup> He wanted to go in the print room but I could not stand that and put it off to a better opportunity.

The next two extracts relate to the vacation of the Carlyles at Annan in 1841.<sup>23</sup> Carlyle went north ahead of his wife. He spent three or four days with Harriet Martineau, who was living in Tynemouth. Early in the year she had had a long illness, and at this time Darwin had offered financial help.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Thomas Wrightson's sermon "The Punishment of Death." Wrightson appears again in the seventh extract.

<sup>20</sup> The Staffordshire home of Josiah Wedgwood II (1769-1843), son of Josiah of Etruria, and father of Hensleigh and of Emma Wedgwood Darwin.

<sup>21</sup> A servant.

<sup>22</sup> Carlyle's interest in faces as they reveal character is reflected in this undated fragment. Mrs. Carlyle first saw the Elgin marbles in 1835. *Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle*, ed. Froude (London, 1883), I, 44.

<sup>23</sup> See Wilson, pp. 22, 139, 143-44, 147; *New Letters of Thomas Carlyle*, ed. A. Carlyle (London, 1904), I, 237; *Letters of J. W. C. to her Family*, pp. 4-6.

<sup>24</sup> *Emma Darwin*, I, 276; II, 58.



In the fourth excerpt Darwin introduces two stock phrases: first, "little murderer," Mrs. Carlyle's sobriquet for Mazzini,<sup>25</sup> author of many expositions of Carlyle's writings;<sup>26</sup> second, Mazzini's own much quoted hit on Carlyle's "platonic love of silence." Fanny would be interested in hearing about Mazzini. At the age of sixteen she was known to her elders as a "furious politician,"<sup>27</sup> and she had maintained her zeal for liberty. "Fanny has a lava of fire that has made her give battle to all governments in Europe under the banner of Mazzini," wrote Madame Sismondi in 1851. "She is of his Committee in London! How could Hensleigh permit it?"<sup>28</sup>

The fifth passage reflects the fact that Carlyle was considering writing for the *Edinburgh Review* an article on French fiction, especially that of George Sand. His esteem for George Sand's work contrasted with his contempt for most modern French books, which he called the "Literature of Desperation."<sup>29</sup>

## IV

July 5 [1841]

I went to Chelsea yesterday and found Jenny studying a most illegible MS of the little murderer, which he had given her to decide whether it was too savage and would hurt Carlyle's feelings. I spelt out one sentence in which he is talking of his love of silence which he characterizes as being a "platonic love." The Yankees are certainly good friends to them, she gave me a bill for 38 pounds to get cashed which a bookseller had sent them, she hardly knew what for. Carlyle actually went by Tynemouth and I shall be glad to hear the result. I do hope he will take a house there instead of Annan which last it seems is not actually taken on account of some difficulty about furniture. It is well if the 38 pounds does not make him commit some foolish action or other. I heard of H M by way of the pseudo-Death's-Head, not a very good account; she is expecting me, she says, so I suppose I must and then Annan is dreadfully near with that railway across.

I informed Thomas of your wish that he should write a "nice" review of Arnold—at the same time I looked at the marginal notes on his copy "sad work" "ditch water" and so on ad infinitum.<sup>30</sup>

## V

[1841]

Mrs. C. goes on Thursday to a furnished cottage they have taken for a month near Annan, and is to take with her as large an assortment as she can procure of the worst French novels, to form the materials for an Article. Is not that a fine conclusion to his desperation—French novels in furnished lodgings? . . . I am glad to hear that you have taken such a decided step as writing to poor

<sup>25</sup> *Letters of J. W. C. to her Family*, pp. 241, 235 n.

<sup>26</sup> Wilson, pp. 127-28; *Life and Letters of Joseph Mazzini* (London, 1891), IV, 56-145.

<sup>27</sup> *Emma Darwin*, I, 94.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 153.

<sup>29</sup> Wilson, pp. 141-42.

<sup>30</sup> This paragraph is pasted on the letter of 1841. It probably belongs to a later letter and refers to Thomas Arnold's *Lectures on the Study of Modern History* (Oxford, 1841, 1842), which Mrs. Carlyle mentions on Aug. 13. 1843. *Letters and Memorials*, I, 233.

Harriet, and I hope that you will do her as much good as Carlyle's visit, for I agree with you that her improvement can only mean the pleasure she received from his visit.

## VI

Richard Monckton Milnes, Lord Houghton, had been introduced to the Carlyles by Charles Buller in 1836, "and so started one of the pleasantest of Carlyle's friendships."<sup>31</sup>

May 17 [1843]

I saw Thomas on Monday who showed me a letter from the little Lord dated Lancaster the villain. So he is gone off without paying his debts. The letter was full of abuse of Past and Present. The affectation, the masses of rubbish, were some of the mild terms he used finishing up with an exhortation to be as kind as he could to his poor little wife whose dejected look when he saw them together had been weighing on his mind. In short it was the letter of a friend.

## VII

Darwin told Mrs. Carlyle, too, the story of Wrightson and the grooms. The next day, August 18, 1843, she wrote her husband a sprightly dramatization of the anecdote. Three days later, in a letter from Scotsbrig, he alludes humorously to Wrightson's "philosophical grooms."<sup>32</sup>

[1843]

if I can I will get Pusey for you again. Wrightson was in a second class train with some grooms, and one of them took out Pusey's sermon to read, and when another said the Puseyites wanted to bring back the times of burning rebuked him (just like you) for his want of charity. A third groom said more Christianity and less Religionism is wanted—is not that a curious little history?

## VIII

The practicing of the young lady next door annoyed Carlyle so much during the writing of *Past and Present* that later, in October, 1843, he investigated the cost of building a soundproof room on the top of the house.<sup>33</sup>

A reference to the birth of two nieces dates this letter. One was Henrietta Darwin (Litchfield), the other Margaret Susan Wedgwood, who became the mother of Ralph Vaughan Williams.<sup>34</sup>

September 30 [1843]

The rest of my acquaintance in London I met in the street, namely Jenny and Thomas at about half a mile's interval and heard all their news, which consisted principally of the old stock, the everlasting pianoforte on which he is at present in a very raving state.

<sup>31</sup> Wilson, p. 25. For his opinion of *Past and Present*, see *Life, Letters, and Friendships of Richard Monckton Milnes*, ed. T. Wemyss (New York, 1891), I, 293.

<sup>32</sup> *Letters and Memorials*, I, 237-38; *Thomas Carlyle: Letters to his Wife*, ed. Trudy Bliss (London, 1953), p. 185.

<sup>33</sup> *Letters of J. W. C. to her Family*, pp. 55, 93, 154; *Letters and Memorials*, I, 264. The room was built ten years later.

<sup>34</sup> *Emma Darwin*, I, xx; II, 85.

## IX

On July 22, 1846, while Carlyle was writing his wife about joining her at the country house of the Paulets, near Liverpool, Darwin came to call. Carlyle broke off his letter, in which he was complaining of the difficulty of packing, and went out with Darwin.<sup>35</sup>

[July 1846]

I see Carlyle almost daily as Madame is at Liverpool and he has nothing to do and he bestows a good deal of his ennui upon me. He intends to start daily but cannot get his portmanteau packed for the life of him. On Sunday he brought Spedding with him and they spent the livelong day in smoking.<sup>36</sup> Spedding worked him up into that degree of rage which Thomas characterizes as talking in *canto fermo*, Spedding urging him to write his theory of Religion to show what a mass of inconsistencies he was composed of.

## X

[1848, the date of *Latter Day Pamphlets*]

I saw Thomas yesterday very miserable in the pangs of labour beginning to print a series of pamphlets "occasional discourses" "beneficent whips" or whatever the title is. I feel rather alarmed, as one can't stand a great deal of such stuff.

## XI

July 31 [1847-1849?]<sup>37</sup>

I went last night and drank tea at Chelsea and Thomas was more savage than I ever saw him. All his savageness was poured out upon the poor Dr<sup>38</sup> and how he could bear it was my wonder. Carlyle's ferocity is like a child's so that really one hardly cares more for it than Tim's, only unfortunately he has no Ma to carry him off cursing and swearing as some beloved angels sometimes do.

In all twelve letters Darwin draws a small-scale but vivid portrait of himself in relation to his intimate friends and family. The letters of both Thomas and Jane Carlyle abound in references to him. For delightful glimpses of "Darwin," the pen of Mrs. Carlyle is unsurpassed; but the best-known portrait appears in Carlyle's *Reminiscences*:

Erasmus Darwin, a most diverse kind of mortal, came to seek us out very soon ("had heard of Carlyle in Germany" etc.); and continues ever since to be a quiet house-friend, honestly attached; though his visits latterly have been rarer and rarer, health so poor, I so occupied, etc. etc. He has something of original and sarcastically ingenious in him; one of the sincerest, naturally truest, and most modest of men. Elder brother of Charles Darwin (the famed *Darwin on Species* of these days), to whom I rather prefer him for intellect, had not his health quite doomed him to silence and patient idleness. . . . My Dear One had a great favour for this honest Darwin always; many a road, to shops and the

<sup>35</sup> Wilson, pp. 332, 338; *Letters of T. C. to his Wife*, p. 227.

<sup>36</sup> Probably James Spedding.

<sup>37</sup> A reference to *Vanity Fair* suggests 1849, though Mrs. Carlyle was borrowing this novel in installments from the London Library in 1847. *Letters and Memorials*, II, 3.

<sup>38</sup> His brother John.

like, he drove her in his Cab ("*Darwingium Cabbum*," comparable to *Georgium Sidus*), in those early days, when even the charge of Omnibuses was a consideration; and his sparse utterances, *sardonic* often, were a great amusement to her. "A perfect gentleman," she at once discerned him to be; and of sound worth, and kindness, in the most unaffected form.<sup>39</sup>

Carlyle and Erasmus Darwin both died in 1881, and in the same year Froude published the *Reminiscences*. Naturally Darwin's relatives commented on Carlyle's portrait. Charles Darwin's son, Francis, records that his father "did not appreciate this sketch of his brother; he thought Carlyle had missed the essence of his most lovable nature."<sup>40</sup> In his "Recollections," Charles Darwin writes,

My brother Erasmus possessed a remarkably clear mind with extensive and diversified tastes and knowledge in literature, art, and even in science. . . . He was extremely agreeable, and his wit often reminded me of that in the letters and works of Charles Lamb. . . . His spirits were not high, sometimes low, more especially during early and middle manhood. He read much, even whilst a boy, and at school encouraged me to read, lending me books. Our minds and tastes were, however, so different, that I do not think I owe much to him intellectually.<sup>41</sup>

As Major Leonard Darwin points out, his sister, Mrs. Litchfield, "discusses Carlyle's description of E.A.D. rather critically." She calls it "misleading," and, perhaps reflecting her father's feeling, continues:

He was the very soul of sincerity, but to speak of him as "this honest Darwin" gives an impression of a kind of hearty open-air frankness, which was entirely unlike our refined, sensitive, reserved uncle. His humour, too, was always kind, if penetrating—never grim or sardonic. . . . Again, I take exception to the phrase that Mrs. Carlyle at once discerned him to be a perfect gentleman. It did not require Mrs. Carlyle's penetration to discern what was so obvious. . . . His whole bearing showed the marks of ill-health. He was very tall and slight, and his movements had a languid grace. He had long, thin hands, which were wonderfully clever and neat in all practical handiwork. . . . he had a fine and interesting face lighting up when he spoke from an habitually patient and sad expression. His voice and laugh, too, were delightfully sympathetic. He read much, and had a wider range of interest in literature than my father. Natural history had never appealed to him, but in the old days he had worked at chemistry, and hence my father still sometimes called him Philos, short for philosopher, his nickname thus earned at school. They were very different in character and disposition, and made admirable foils in their talks with each other.<sup>42</sup>

Julia Wedgwood ("Snow," one of the children "dearest of all") was moved to characterize Erasmus Darwin for the "wider circle"

<sup>39</sup> Ed. C. E. Norton, *Everyman's edition* (London, 1932), p. 115.

<sup>40</sup> *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, I, 22-23.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 21, 26.

<sup>42</sup> *Emma Darwin*, II, 146-50. Mrs. Litchfield describes her uncle's attitude toward the young as "quite unique." She quotes from a letter he wrote to "one of the little Hensleigh Wedgwoods," and ends her sketch of her "Uncle Ras" with a brief excerpt from his letter of Aug. 23, 1852, to Mrs. Hensleigh Wedgwood. Two sentences follow:

"Dear Missis,

I called at Chelsea on Sunday evening and found Mrs. Carlyle sitting in a corner of the drawing-room, the rest being filled with furniture, the house in the hands of plasterers and painters, the picture of discomfort. She has no maid, only a child, and can get no dinner, so I humanely gave her one today."

whose interest had been excited by Carlyle's tribute—"a portrait from Mr. Carlyle's portfolio not regretted by any who loved the original." In a letter to the *Spectator*, September 3, 1881,<sup>43</sup> published just after his death,<sup>44</sup> she calls Darwin "the man whom, among those who were not his kindred, Carlyle appears to have most loved." He was "the faithful and affectionate old friend of both the Carlyles"; his friendship, she says, was "equally warm with both husband and wife." She suggests that Carlyle enjoyed the "combination of liveliness and repose" in Darwin. His society seemed to her, ironically, to have much the same charm as the writings of Charles Lamb, "the man whom Carlyle least appreciated." "There was the same playfulness, the same lightness of touch, the same tenderness, perhaps the same limitations." Darwin's most marked characteristics were his strong sense of humor and his faculty for giving others "the kind of happiness usually associated with youth."

It is quite probable that "Snow's" association with her father's cousin helped make her the interesting woman she became. For attractive she was—to Robert Browning, who met her in 1864, after the death of his wife. Their correspondence begins in ardor with Browning addressing notes to that "very charming and accomplished lady," Julia's mother, and continues to 1870. "A Broken Friendship," the editor subtitles this correspondence.<sup>45</sup> But E. M. Forster, who from childhood has known the Darwins and Wedgwoods,<sup>46</sup> declares in his delicate sketch of "Snow" that the editor portrays Miss Wedgwood as

much too portentous and bleak a female. She was not like that—at least she was not like that when I knew her in her later days. Her deafness made her formidable for strangers, but she was polite and cordial, extremely modest about her work, and decidedly gay.<sup>47</sup>

Does not this description suggest the personality of her dear old friend Erasmus Darwin? "Snow" represented the "sound intellectual tradition" of her family. She did her work probably with no more inward happiness than he had found<sup>48</sup> but with the same spirit. Her support

<sup>43</sup> Reprinted in full in *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, I, 22-24.

<sup>44</sup> Darwin died on Aug. 26, 1881 (*Emma Darwin*, II, 247) and was buried in the Downe churchyard.

<sup>45</sup> *Robert Browning and Julia Wedgwood, Their Letters*, ed. Richard Curle (New York, 1937), Introduction.

<sup>46</sup> His great-aunt, Marianne Thornton, was an old friend of Fanny Mackintosh and extended her affection to Fanny's three cultivated daughters, Snow, Hope, and Effie. His aunt, Laura Forster, was the lifelong friend of Henrietta Darwin Litchfield. *Marianne Thornton*, pp. 216, 220. "Aunt Etty," it may be observed, held a low opinion of the work of two young artists—Ralph Vaughan Williams and E. M. Forster. Raverat, p. 273. See Letter VIII.

<sup>47</sup> *Two Cheers for Democracy* (London, 1951), p. 208. Assisting Miss Wedgwood in revising her work *The Moral Ideal* in 1907, Forster found her "most pleasant to devil for." He does, however, quote a paragraph from his great-aunt on the subject of her erudite friend, beginning "I do find myself so wicked for finding Snow such a dreadful bore." *Marianne Thornton*, p. 223.

<sup>48</sup> Charles Darwin wrote of his brother, "He was not, I think, a happy man, and for many years did not value life, though never complaining." *Life and Letters*, III, 228.

of the Woman's Movement, of which Forster speaks, may even have been encouraged by Erasmus Darwin, who, a generation earlier, had stood by Harriet Martineau when her books were "much too 'glorious' for Hensleigh's taste."<sup>49</sup> "Infinite love to Snow," wrote Erasmus Darwin when she was four. Not to be measured, either, his influence on her.

Many years later, Julia Wedgwood wrote another tribute to her old friend, this one for the *Bedford College Magazine* of June, 1902.<sup>50</sup> Without some reference to the long and faithful service to Bedford College for Women for which Erasmus Darwin is publicly remembered, no study of the man would be complete. The letters I have presented show only Darwin's private friendships and are too early to cover the period of his connection with the college. As Carlyle worked to establish the London Library, so Erasmus Darwin helped found Bedford College. From the beginning he aided Mrs. Elisabeth Jesser Reid, the first principal, in her effort to make higher education for women a reality. Perhaps he remembered his grandfather, Dr. Erasmus Darwin, and his *Plan for the Conduct of Female Education* (1797).<sup>51</sup>

The "Prospectus for a Ladies College in Bedford Square" included the names of Erasmus Darwin, Hensleigh Wedgwood, and his wife.<sup>52</sup> When the college opened its doors in 1849, it had three trustees: Darwin, Wedgwood, and Thomas Farrer.<sup>53</sup> Hensleigh Wedgwood, a philologist, remained a Member of Bedford College until his death in 1891.<sup>54</sup> Farrer, who later married the third daughter of the Hensleigh Wedgwoods, carried on the interest of the two families and became a generous benefactor.<sup>55</sup> But "neither Mr. Farrer nor Mr. Wedgwood engaged actively in the College affairs after it had been set on foot. . . . The position of Mr. Darwin was very different," writes Margaret J. Tuke, historian of Bedford College. "He was Chairman of the Council for nearly twenty, Visitor for ten, years" (1850-1869; 1869-1879).<sup>56</sup> The portrait of Erasmus Darwin painted in 1850 by George Richmond, R.A., which hangs in Down House, is reproduced in Dame Margaret's book. Mrs. Hensleigh Wedgwood also worked actively as a Member of the Council from 1849 to 1869. "She brought to the rather austere atmosphere which prevailed among the Lady Visitors a sense of humor, inherited no doubt from her father. . . ." Like her husband, she remained a Member of the College till her death in 1889.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Erasmus Darwin, Letter XII. See n. 14.

<sup>50</sup> *Emma Darwin*, II, 147; Margaret J. Tuke, *History of Bedford College for Women, 1849-1937* (London, 1939), p. 39.

<sup>51</sup> Tuke, pp. 37, 40.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 319-20.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.

From 1898 to 1925, Major Leonard Darwin, "in whom the College had one of its best friends,"<sup>58</sup> carried on the family tradition by serving as Member of the Council—first as treasurer and vice-chairman, then as chairman from 1913 to 1920, and as vice-chairman for another five years.<sup>59</sup> No doubt Erasmus Darwin set an example for Major Leonard, R.E., who, besides being president of the Royal Geographical Society and of the Eugenics Society,<sup>60</sup> served Bedford College with distinction. "Uncle Ras" charmed his nephews when they were small and influenced them when they were men.

The friendship of Thomas Carlyle and Erasmus Darwin serves to emphasize the altogether different circumstances under which Carlyle, on the one hand, and the eminent members of the Darwin family, on the other, achieved fame. Born into a humble home in Annandale, Scotland, Carlyle influenced the thought and action of nineteenth-century England in his own strength; no distinguished ancestors made straight his path. The Darwins and Wedgwoods made their great and diverse contributions to England's intellectual and cultural life as members of a large upper-class family. From Dr. Erasmus Darwin and Josiah Wedgwood, the grandfathers of Erasmus and Charles, to the present generation—Sir Charles Galton Darwin, Robin Darwin, C. V. Wedgwood, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and others—the members of this family could draw on the resources of wealth, learning, and social position their kinsmen had enjoyed for generations.

Different social and economic circumstances help explain different temperaments. Carlyle's youth, with its poverty, strict parental discipline, and ill health, figures to this day in the case studies of physicians and psychiatrists. Unlike Carlyle, the Darwins and Wedgwoods began life as happy children. Parents and uncles and aunts made their childhood a rich and free experience. When Charles finished his A.B. degree at Cambridge, his uncle Josiah Wedgwood II advised Dr. Robert W. Darwin to allow his son to postpone taking orders so that he might have the pleasure of accompanying Captain Fitzroy on a two-year voyage in the *Beagle*.<sup>61</sup> The expedition lasted five years. Out of a gentlemanly interest in science, pursued quietly in the country, grew his great achievement—not without effort, not without trial of character, but without handicaps, except that of the ill health common among Victorians and chronic in the Darwin family. When Erasmus Darwin felt physically unable to practice medicine, in which he had taken a degree, he passed his time with his friends and relatives, touching their lives in a kindly way and leaving his large fortune to his kin.

The very reminiscences of old age point the contrast between the

<sup>58</sup> Tuke, p. 236.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 40, 202-203, 236-37.

<sup>60</sup> Raverat, p. 196.

<sup>61</sup> *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, I, 107.



disadvantages of the young Carlyle and the advantages of the young Charles Darwin. One day in 1879, William, the eldest son of Charles Darwin, took Carlyle for a drive. The conversation turned to Goethe, whose friendship Carlyle had the genius to win when he was yet a young man. William was touched by the old man's speaking "with real sorrow in his voice that want of money had prevented him ever seeing Goethe."<sup>62</sup> How different the experience of William Darwin's father! In the modest analysis of his "success as a man of science" that concludes his *Recollections*, Charles Darwin writes, "Lastly, I have had ample leisure from not having to earn my own bread."<sup>63</sup>

Different as were their social backgrounds, Carlyle and his Darwin-Wedgwood contemporaries enjoyed an association in the London of the 1840's that was rewarding on both sides. Today the contributions made by a great man and a great family take on luster by being compared.

*Hunter College of the City of New York*

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<sup>62</sup> *Emma Darwin*, II, 235-36; D. A. Wilson and D. W. MacArthur, *Carlyle in Old Age* (London, 1934), pp. 447-48.

<sup>63</sup> *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, I, 198.

MALLARME'S MIRROR OF ART  
AN EXPLICATION OF *SES PURS ONGLES* . . .

By ROBERT J. NELSON

Mallarmé has the reputation of being one of the most difficult of poets. Many students of poetry attribute this difficulty to what they consider his arbitrary association of purely aesthetic (here, sensual) effects (sound, imagery, rhythm) to the deliberate exclusion of coherent sense or "message." Indeed, it is in this aesthetic arbitrariness, this radical unamenability to verbal significance that many would locate the purity of this "purest of poets." Yet it is a misconception to believe that poetry, whose medium is expressive language, could ever achieve such a musical purity. (Pater did not say that all art aspires to be music, but that all art aspires to the condition of music.) In the case of Mallarmé, it is especially doubtful that significance is purely sensual. Few poets have been so obsessed with a central, coherent theme.

*Ses purs ongles* . . . is a case in point. Jacques Gengoux, taking his cue from the poet's own analysis of the sonnet in a letter to Cazalis, treats the poem as an allegory of "la Pensée," a Cartesian celebration of the "moi pur."<sup>1</sup> While ultimately justifiable, such an interpretation passes over much of the imagery of the poem as it concretely points to the experience which brought the poet to the rarified atmosphere of the "moi pur": his poetic activity. For, as often with Mallarmé, the subject of this poem is the creative act—indeed, this poem itself.

In his commentary Charles Mauron, who has recognized that the poem is less simple than Gengoux would have us believe, has already suggested the creative act as the real theme, but without explicating in detail the pervasive symbolism of artistic creation in the poem. Moreover, Mauron seems to have missed the meaning of the final tercet and thus ultimately to have underestimated the full force of Mallarmé's paean to poetry.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, basing my analysis on Mauron's intuitive grasp of the subject of the poem, I should now like to explicate the poem in some detail in order to bring out in all its implications the "mirage interne des mots mêmes" of which Mallarmé spoke in his letter to Cazalis.<sup>3</sup>

Ses purs ongles très haut dédiant leur onyx,  
L'Angoisse, ce minuit, soutient, lampadophore,  
Maint rêve vespéral brûlé par le Phénix  
Que ne recueille pas de cinéraire amphore

<sup>1</sup> *Le Symbolisme de Mallarmé* (Paris, 1950), pp. 53-58.

<sup>2</sup> In his commentary accompanying Roger Fry's translations of Mallarmé's poems (New York: The New Classics Series, 1951), pp. 236-40.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Gengoux, p. 53.

Sur les crédences, au salon vide: nul ptyx,  
Aboli bibelot d'inanité sonore,  
(Car le Maître est allé puiser des pleurs au Styx  
Avec ce seul objet dont le Néant s'honore).

Mais proche la croisée au nord vacante, un or  
Agonise selon peut-être le décor  
Des licornes ruant du feu contre une nixe,

Elle, défunte nue en le miroir, encor  
Que, dans l'oubli fermé par le cadre, se fixe  
De scintillations sitôt le septuor.

In classical sonnet fashion, the poem poses in the quatrains a "question" to which it gives the "response" in the tercets. In the first quatrain "ses purs ongles" is metonymic: the nails evoke the hands which in turn evoke the creative act in its most obviously "artistic" expression: painting and, to a lesser extent, music. But the nails, by virtue of their physical texture, their appearance, and their location at the delicate extremity of the artistic instrument of the hand, also symbolize the delicacy, the rarity, and the intensely spiritual quality of the creative act. In short, the nails symbolize the purity of the creative act, as becomes explicit in the adjective "purs." This movement, as it were, toward the extremities suggests both tension and aspiration, states of being which become explicit in "très haut," showing us the poet with his hands raised in the manner of a suppliant or a priest in dedication. This hieratic interpretation is reinforced in "dédiant leur onyx." At once brilliant color and precious stone, "onyx" (etymologically *ὄνυξ* "claw") repeats the striving, grasping image of "ongles." Furthermore, rarity and delicacy reinforce the first image of the poem ("purs"), while in its lustrous blackness the image of the stone heightens the sense of spirituality and mystery created by the religious gesture of "dédiant."

In verse 2 "L'Angoisse" reminds us of the pain accompanying the creative act, with an honorary status being conferred on it through the capitalization. "Ce minuit" is at once literal and figurative, pointing both to the real, temporal setting of the poet's activity and to the dark, mysterious ambiance within which poetic activity takes place. "Soutient" tells us that the "Angoisse" is constant, but it also demonstrates that the anguish of creation is not passively suffered, that it is an agent or partner in the creative act. This beneficent role becomes apparent in "lampadophore" which is in apposition with "Angoisse": the latter "carries" the light which illumines the midnight of dark nothingness in which the poet works. These apposite nouns at either end of the verse give a balance to the "minuit" in the center, structurally dramatizing the state of tension typical of the creative act.

For both Noulet and Gengoux, "le Phénix" in verse 3 refers to the sun and symbolizes "l'Idéal" or "la Pensée."<sup>4</sup> Noulet goes so

<sup>4</sup> *L'Œuvre poétique de Stéphane Mallarmé* (Paris, 1950), p. 453.

far as to deny that the term could also refer to the legendary bird, since that creature consumed itself, not other things (here "rêve vespéral"). Yet the critic reminds us of what Mallarmé undoubtedly had in mind: that the legendary bird was itself identified with the sun. Moreover, in some versions of the legend the creature did not go up on the spot, as it were, through some mysterious spontaneous combustion, but built a pyre of odorous woods and gums.

Thus, in its sunlike activity (burning, constant self-renewal) the Phoenix of the imagination consumes the constantly ("Maint") presented visions ("rêve") which are the stuff of its pyre. And it is maintained in this activity by the lampbearer "Angoisse." Then, like the bird which momentarily "disappears" in its own ashes or the sun which "disappears" in its own setting, the imagination mysteriously returns to burn anew and with greater intensity (the bird is younger, more beautiful), for it never fully consumes the visions but integrates them as part of its heightened activity. And so, to the extent that "le Phénix" does refer to the sun in the poem, it is referring to the sun not as a symbol of "la Pensée" or "l'Idéal," but as a symbol of a lesser faculty of the soul in the view of this Platonist poet: the imagination. To symbolize the highest faculty of the soul whether in intellectual or aesthetic activity, Mallarmé has reserved a more appropriate image.

The adjective "vespéral" in verse 3 offers some difficulty: it shows us that the dreams or visions are waking dreams, that the activity of the imagination occurs as a part of a vigil. But one wonders if the learned poet is not alluding to the fact that vespers actually occur in the daytime, during the late afternoon. If so, it would suggest that during the "minuit" of the poem's temporal setting the poet re-évoques or reviews the various visions which the day's experience brought to him. On the other hand, "vespéral" might simply mean nocturnal; but for religious reasons and for its obvious connotation of vigilance or attention on the part of the poet, Mallarmé might have preferred it to some other synonym for nocturnal (I need not stress that prosodic considerations are also important). In any case, whatever the time of day involved, Mallarmé certainly wished to capitalize on the religious connotation of the adjective in support of the hieratic role of the poet indicated in the earlier verses.

The religious motif is underscored again in the "cinéraire amphore" of verse 4. But the funerary urn is also a symbol of artistic perfection, a work of art which enshrines the vision of some artist in its very form. (And it is a work of plastic art itself, shaped by some artist's "purs ongles.") But it is evoked here more as an aspiration than a reality, since this poet has not yet shaped his work of art ("que ne recueille pas"). The work does not yet exist, but when it does, this particular symbol reminds us, its perfect, closed, and eternal form will contain the ashes of the trying period of its composition. The ashes we presume to be in the urn might possibly refer to the ashes of "le Phénix," this kind of cross-reference being

part of Mallarmé's "mirage interne des mots mêmes." However, whether bird or sun, "le Phénix" figures in this poem more in relation to its activity than to its achieved beauty. A more likely cross-reference, then, would be between the urn as an eternally fixed form and the mirror with its fixed "cadre" in the final tercet.

"Sur les crédences" in verse 5 is a direct evocation of the physical setting. However, with a poet as learned as Mallarmé, we may be sure that he wished not only to dramatize the physical setting, but also to recall the religious connotation of "crédence" (a table on which the sacred vessels of the Holy Eucharist in the Roman Catholic Church were held), thus repeating the religious leitmotiv of the earlier lines. In this context, "au salon vide" also takes on religious connotations: in the absence of furniture (except, of course, for the altar-like "crédence"), the darkness, the implied nocturnal silence, and the vigil of the poet-priest, all evoke the quiet of a church.

In "nul ptyx" Maumon and others have suggested that Mallarmé possibly refers to the decorative sea shells which often adorned the mantles of French living rooms in his day, or that the poet, in forging the word from the Greek *πτύξ* (a fold, as of cloth), wished to symbolize rhyme, that point at which verse "folds back."<sup>5</sup> Obviously, in this standard sonnet, the rhyme in *-yx* (*-ix*, *-ixe*) is compulsive at this point. However, that the poet should make up a rhyming word here does not mean that he has abandoned all concern with meaning for the sake of a purely sensual effect. Just the opposite, for, whichever of at least three interpretations of "ptyx" we take (decorative sea shell, "fold," "pure" rhyme), its use can be integrated into the theme of poetic self-consciousness which Mallarmé elaborates in the rest of the poem.

Taken as a decorative sea shell, the image tells us that the poet dismisses ("nul") the essentially bourgeois conception of art as merely decorative; taken as a learned neologism on the part of the erudite poet, "ptyx" does indeed stand for rhyme itself, but rhyme, in turn, stands for poetry, the arbitrary imposition of form or meaning on the nothingness of existence. Obviously, a similar interpretation obtains for "ptyx" taken as an arbitrarily created word standing for rhyme without any learned allusion to the Greek. As to the fact that, in these last two interpretations, the adjective "nul" seems somewhat contradictory, we must remember the dramatic context of the sonnet: the poet at his vigil has not yet finished his work of art, his poem, his "ptyx."

Verse 7 could be read as reinforcing all the conceptions of "ptyx" I have just elaborated. Consonant with Maumon's reading of "ptyx," the verse might be read "negatively": Mallarmé rejects as a decorative sea shell the conception of art as "useless ornamentation." However, I believe that in the richly orchestrated "ininité sonore" Mallarmé is typically reiterating the meaningful "uselessness" of

<sup>5</sup> Maumon, pp. 238-39.

poetry, pointing once again to the value of rhyme as form imposed on the chaos of existence, with the notion of form being here expressed not in the allusion to the plastic arts but to musical harmony, that is, order or proportion in sound. But, once again, "aboli," like "nul" in verse 5, reminds us that the form or order has not yet been achieved (in fact, it is even possible that Mallarmé reminds the linguistically alert of his readers that a common synonym for *abolir* is *annuler*).

Verses 7 and 8 offer an explanation of why the work does not yet stand on the "credence-altar." In verse 7 "Le Maître" refers to the poet or artist: it is a common practice in France to address artists in this way, and this is especially true of distinguished men of letters. Yet we may be sure that Mallarmé is also emphasizing in this term the mastery of the poet: master of his art as he is master of his home (or studio) in which he finds himself. The voyage to the river Styx, the river of the country of the dead in classical mythology, repeats one of the essential themes of the poem: the uncharted regions which the poet explores in his activity. But the country of the dead also repeats the notion that this country is a nothingness, a formlessness out of which the poet brings meaning and form. Finally, it is also possible that Mallarmé wishes to identify his "Maître" with two earlier master poets who courageously voyaged to the country of the dead to bring back meaning: Virgil and Dante. In verse 8 "ce seul objet" refers back to the "ptyx," rhyme or poetry which is unique in its ability to give sense to the non-sense of existence ("dont le Néant s'honore").

Thus the message of the quatrains seems to be that the poet's function is of an hieratic nature. The creative act is self-sufficient, the sublimely human gesture. But it is accompanied by much anguish and often yields no results in the form of an achieved work. The quatrains may be said to pose the question: will the poet succeed in creating a poem?

In the tercets, the introductory adversative conjunction, "Mais," advises us that a new movement, in clear thematic contrast to the movement of the quatrains, is about to begin. The poet's eye catches a glint of gold through the northern window: possibly, if we do not read the earlier "minuit" too literally, this light is the first "crack of dawn," a familiar enough symbol of fruitfulness, though some might be tempted to argue with the poet about the geography of his rising sun. Actually, more important about his geography is the fact that the light comes from the north, the light so favored by painters, an allusion which fits in well with the evocation of the plastic arts earlier in the poem and, later, with the "cadre" of the mirror. In this creator's light (verses 10-11) the poet sees a fantastical scene of mythological creatures which prance about a nixie in a shower of sparks. Noulet conjectures that "sans doute, il y avait, dans le salon de Mallarmé, un motif de la cheminée ou de la console qui,

différemment visionné, devenait suivant le cas quelque monstre symbolique."<sup>6</sup> Yet it is unlikely that the scrupulous Mallarmé would make so casual an allusion. Moreover, Noulet fails to indicate just how the symbol figures in "le cas" of this poem.

Gengoux suggests that Mallarmé possibly alludes to the Christian symbolism of the unicorn as Christ and the nixie as the Virgin Mary, but the critic obviously, and rightly in my opinion, prefers to see in the allusion the constellation of "La Licorne . . . groupe informe d'étoiles" which Mallarmé consciously contrasts with the "scintillations fixes du septuor."<sup>7</sup> Consonant with his primarily intellectual interpretation of the theme, Gengoux sees the relatively amorphous constellation of La Licorne as symbolizing "la vie agonisante" ("Agonise" in the poem) which wrongly and unsuccessfully struggles against "la Pensée." Yet the "peut-être" of verse 10 tells us that the poet sees this scene in his imagination, that it is what he makes of the "informe" constellation which his eye catches. It is, like many an earlier "rêve vespéral," subject to being "brûlé par le Phénix."

However, the poet turns back to his room or studio or sanctuary, that is, to himself as a maker of poems and not as a seer of visions. He sees that the mirror has caught ("défunte" in verse 12) the reflection of the nixie. "Nue" tells us that it has caught her in all her sensual beauty, and the abrupt juxtaposition of "défunte" and "nue" tells us that it has caught or arrested that beauty in its most transitory aspect. This ability of the mirror to fix the transitory or the "informe" is made explicit in verse 13: "l'oubli fermé par le cadre." "Le cadre" evokes painting once again, the art form which most readily stands for the very idea of art to most people—so much so that the word art immediately evokes painting and the word artist a painter. So in referring to the frame of the mirror, Mallarmé is referring to all form. He is also relying on one of the oldest conceptions of art: as a mirror or reflection of experience.

Yet, for all its familiarity, the mirror is an especially apt symbol of art for Mallarmé with his theme of self-consciousness: the most frequent use of a mirror is for the reflection of the self. However, the self in question here is not the familiar man behind the artist of romantic psychology; it is rather the poet *qua* poet. Mallarmé's mirror of art emphasizes not the "reflected" and its "properties," but the "reflector" and its "properties." Not what the mirror of the work of art reflects but that it does reflect is the importance of the image in this poem; that it holds an image and not the image itself is of the essence here. Thus the poet's glance into the mirror symbolizes the final stages of the creative act in which the poet formally catches his vision.

As I have already suggested, Gengoux's intellectualist interpreta-

<sup>6</sup> Noulet, p. 455.

<sup>7</sup> Gengoux, pp. 56-57.



tion of the poem need not clash with aesthetic interpretation. Indeed, the creative act as it is recorded in this poem by an obvious Platonist follows familiar "realist" (in technical philosophical terms) lines: will ("L'Angoisse") keeps the poet attentive ("soutient") or maintains the vigil during which the imagination ("le Phénix") is active; but the intelligence ("le miroir" which sees as we metaphorically use that verb to mean understand; "le cadre" which fixes or orders experience) is the highest faculty, the one which brings the activity of the soul to the perfection of form. Obviously, the imagination here is not the vast synthesizing faculty of earlier, romantic poetic theorizers of the nineteenth century, but is a subordinate faculty, related more to the appetitive faculty of the early Greek philosophers. For the anti-romantic Mallarmé, it is the intelligence which synthesizes.

The sonnet concludes by reemphasizing what Mallarmé considers the essential property of art, one which establishes its superiority over all of man's other efforts to give meaning to his existence: its ability to arrest ("se fixe" in verse 13) the most fleeting aspects of reality. The mirror catches the reflection of the stars down to their last glistening. The stars are familiar symbols of eternity or at least of endurance, and in his arrangement of them into constellations ("le septuor" in verse 14) man seems to have found an approach to reality, the scientific, which shows his command of the universe, his mastery of the reality about him in its most extensive physical and temporal manifestations.

Yet Mallarmé contends in the concluding verses that such a claim on the part of science is at best presumptuous and at worst illusory. Science (astronomy is one of the oldest and purest of the exact sciences) is inadequate to encompass reality, for something escapes it: the glistening of the stars is unaccounted for in the "forms" of science. But the mirror of art can capture both the form (as the poet does here through the medium of language, "le septuor") and the "scintillation." More important still, art not only "beats science at its own game," but it encompasses an aspect of reality totally beyond the compass of science: it fixes in eternal form both the world of imagination (verses 10 and 11) and the physical world as well.<sup>8</sup>

The tercets seem to imply that the poet does create his poem, in the symbolic gesture of looking into the mirror which has caught his vision. The tercets also affirm the superiority of art as an approach to reality. More or less explicitly, we are told that art is both more precise and more comprehensive than science. We are also told,

<sup>8</sup> Mauron seems to have missed this relationship between poetry and the stars: "In this 'empty frame of oblivion' (which is Mallarméan for a mirror) something appears and remains: the stars of course, but also the poem itself henceforth motionless" (p. 239). Apparently, the commentator sees the stars and poetry as separate but equal symbols of eternity—an interpretation which misstates the dramatic relationship between the two. Again, Mauron does not seem to understand that the mirror does more than reflect the poem—it is the poem.

implicitly, that art is superior to religion. Indeed, the religious imagery of the poem is designed to project art itself as a religion and the poet as its godhead. Just as in formal religion God thinks about God, so in this poem the poet thinks about the poet; each contemplates his own essence. Mallarmé also thus implicitly deals with the question of the "usefulness" of art: like God's, the poet's contemplative, self-conscious activity is by definition of the highest ethical value. Poetry is the supreme way of knowing reality, and this cognitive function is more important than the ethical function which is erroneously assigned to it.

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## SACRILEGE AND METAMORPHOSIS TWO ASPECTS OF SARTRE'S IMAGERY

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Sartrean existentialism is, among other things, a revolt against abstraction. It suspects the abstract intellect of deforming "lived experience," of freezing such experience into false postures. I take it that any philosophical approach which attempts to deal with lived experience involves a breakaway from the idiom of more formal and abstract philosophy. This calls on new imagery, and it is indeed the distinctive and recurring images in Sartre's imaginative work that represent one of its most individual and arresting features.<sup>1</sup>

Two sets of images seem to me peculiarly interesting and important for the way in which they illustrate how Sartre's imagery is thematically linked with his philosophic notions and related to the texture of his imaginative writings. The first of these may be conveniently described as sacrilegious, since they exploit with irony, and often harsh irony, certain Christian rites and exemplary acts. It is possible to isolate no fewer than ten episodes in Sartre's writing in which symbolic acts of a profoundly religious character are used with destructive irony. Three of these are direct references to stigmata; two are oblique allusions to Christ on the cross; two refer to the Sacrament of Communion; two relate to the kissing of lepers; and one to the washing of another's feet, conceived as an act of Christian humility.

The earliest image occurs in the incident where Roquentin, the central figure of *La Nausée*, sees Lucie, the charwoman at his hotel, quarreling with her husband on the boulevard Noir: "Oui, c'est elle, c'est Lucie. Mais transfigurée, hors d'elle-même, souffrant avec une folle générosité. Je l'envie. Elle est là, toute droite, écartant ses bras, comme si elle attendait les stigmates" (N, 44-45). Here the "stig-mata" symbolize an extreme of human suffering, but the posture of crucifixion also suggests Sartre's idea of suffering conceived as serious "playing up" in an attempt to approximate "real" suffering. In this sense, the image suggests we are witnessing a sincere miming of

<sup>1</sup> In quoting from Sartre's work in the present article, I use the following abbreviations for convenience:

AR: *L'Âge de Raison* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945)

DBD: *Le Diable et le Bon Dieu*, 3 actes et 11 tableaux (Paris: Gallimard, 1951)

EN: *L'Être et le Néant: Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1943)

MDA: *La Mort dans l'Âme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1949)

N: *La Nausée* (Paris: Collection Pourpre, 1950)

S: *Le Sursis* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945)

SG: *Saint Genet, Comédien et Martyr* (Paris: Gallimard, 1952)

the crucifixion. Lucie, in terms that Sartre makes us familiar with elsewhere (*EN*, 135), wants to "realize" her suffering, to raise it to the impressive plenitude embodied in a statue, a tragic mask, or a myth.

The second use of the same image is to be found in the same novel when the Autodidact explains the circumstances which persuaded him to join the French Socialist Party. He is proud of his "courage" in joining, and Roquentin sarcastically describes his "air de martyr" before adding: "Il a écarté les bras et me présente ses paumes, les doigts tournés vers le sol, comme s'il allait recevoir les stigmates" (*N*, 164). The whole tone here implies that this heroism is fraudulent, a wretched parody of Christ's passion on behalf of other men. It is not the religion of Christ that is impugned here as much as the "religion of humanity."

The third and most ambitious use of the image occurs in *Le Diable et le Bon Dieu*, where Goetz's self-mutilation in the church is a desperate and, because of the context, blasphemous parody of Christ's stigmata accepted for the redemption of mankind. Goetz uses it to win over the common people to his gospel of love. His faking of the stigmata simply reflects his attempt to engineer a communion between himself and other men. In doing so, he incidentally performs an action of genuine altruism for the sake of Catherine, his abandoned whore, but this cannot alter the sacrilegious character of his attempt to "act" Christ and displace the Divinity.

The image of the cross is first used, highly obliquely, in the scene where Mathieu watches Lola as she begins her number in the nightclub: "Lola leva les bras lourds, ça y est; elle fait la croix, il vit s'ouvrir une bouche saignante" (*AR*, 182). Here the oblique allusion to the posture of the crucifixion is intensified by being juxtaposed to the harsh metaphor "bleeding," as related to a heavily made-up mouth. The total effect of the image is one of almost offensive irony in that it stresses the disparity between the cross, conceived as a symbol of suffering and love, and the cabaret-singer's vulgar mimicry of suffering as associated with a sentimental song. Lola is seen as engaged in the sort of "playing up" of emotion which is characteristic of the efforts of an unstable consciousness to achieve coincidence with itself.<sup>2</sup>

This image recurs in a long, confused, and tense passage in which Daniel believes himself to be pierced by the Divine scrutiny (*S*, 108-109). The general tone of this passage is distinctly ironic, if only because of its rapid shifts from Daniel's metaphysical apprehensions to his gusts of homosexual feeling as he glimpses, through the half-trance in which he finds himself, fleeting images of the delectable body of the young, half-naked gardener. It is in this ironic context

<sup>2</sup> Cf.: "L'émotion de tristesse active en ce cas est donc comédie magique d'impuissance." *Esquisse d'une théorie des émotions* (Paris: Hermann, 1939), p. 37.

that Sartre inserts a curious oblique reference to Christ on the cross. A Biblical allusion pierces Daniel's mind when he is most intensely aware of the presence of God: "Eli, Eli, lamma sabacthani, ce furent les derniers mots qu'il rencontra" (S, 109). I would say that the effect of Daniel's self-conscious use of Christ's despairing words on the cross<sup>3</sup> is to suggest ironically the gulf between Christ's passion and Daniel's own religious experience. The impression we are left with is of a parody of religious experience, and the upshot of this brilliantly rendered scene is to confirm us in the view that Daniel's "discovery" of God is a piece of blatant bad faith. His invocation of God is an elaborate feint designed to cloak the truth that his freedom is inalienable and that he alone can choose the meaning which his life is to have for him.

The Sacrament of Communion finds its way into Daniel's seething indignation as he walks away from his encounter with Boris, who is on the point of stealing a dictionary of slang when interrupted by Daniel. Daniel quite misinterprets Boris' coolness toward him on this occasion, and his frustrated lust finds expression in a sort of sacrilegious mockery directed against Mathieu's supposed malign influence over Boris: "le petit avale tout, les cafés-crème et les théories, comme des hosties; va, va promener tes airs de première communicante, il était là gourmé et précieux comme un âne chargé de reliques . . ." (AR, 155). I think the key to this particular piece of sacrilegious imagery is to be found in the avowals which Daniel makes in *Le Sursis*, when he becomes aware of being the object of God's scrutiny: "je suis la plus honteuse de tes pensées, tu me vois et je te sers, je me dresse contre toi, je t'insulte et en t'insultant, je te sers" (S, 166). This suggests that Daniel's indulgence in sacrilegious expressions is rather like Baudelaire's Satanism. It is not a means of exiling God or denying Him but a method of calling on Him to interest Himself in one's case. It is a means of being judged and disposed of and so is nothing more than another version of bad faith.

The other use of the Communion image occurs in that incident of the last meal which Mathieu shares with his comrades on the church tower before their suicidal last stand: "c'était leur dernier repas et il était sacré" (MDA, 172). The meal is preceded by an accident in which Mathieu cuts his hand while opening a tin. The wound is bound up by the soldiers who are his comrades. The association of the meal with blood that has been shed for others suggests a simulacrum of the Communion rite.<sup>4</sup> The force of the image here springs from its being related to Mathieu's yearning for a fraternal union with other men. It is another of those symbolic acts by which he attempts to break out of his solitude. Fundamentally, this attempt too is defective because it is falsified by the situation in which the sol-

<sup>3</sup> The words are, of course, reproduced exactly as recorded in the Gospels; e.g., Matthew 27:46.

<sup>4</sup> As Kenneth Douglas discerns in "Sartre and the Self-inflicted Wound," *Yale French Studies*, No. 9 (Summer, 1952), p. 128.

diers find themselves; but the sympathetic tone in which the whole incident is related—there is a marked absence of irony—suggests that the image is not intended so critically or destructively here as it is in Daniel's case.

The other three images of a religious character which are exploited by Sartre are not directly connected with the symbols or rites of the Church, but as they embody acts of exemplary piety, they fall within our scope here. Two of these are episodes in which the "kiss for the leper" is involved. The first is perfectly literal. It is the occasion when the renegade, Goetz, tries to outbid Tetzl the seller of indulgences by planting a kiss full on the mouth of a leper who moves on the fringe of the crowd at the sale of indulgences. The weary resignation with which the leper accepts the kiss serves ironically to deflate Goetz's pious gesture: "S'il y va de votre salut, je ne peux pas refuser, mais faites vite. Tous les mêmes: on croirait que le Bon Dieu m'a donné la lèpre tout exprès pour leur fournir l'occasion de gagner le Ciel" (*DBD*, 155). The deflation is complete when the leper accepts an indulgence as a gift from Tetzl in preference to a further kiss of Christian charity. Goetz's gesture collapses in ridicule. The significance of Goetz's action is that it symbolizes a further attempt on his part to force a communion with other men. To this end, he indulges in a parody of sanctity in the hope of winning over the peasantry, but his gesture proves abortive.

In the same play, Goetz performs another abortive act of charity when he insists on washing the feet of his disaffected valet, Karl (*DBD*, 128). The gesture is doubtless intended to recall the incident in the New Testament where Christ washes the feet of His disciples (John 13:5). But the peasants remain quite unconvinced of the genuineness of Goetz's gesture, as their derisive comments show. It never has for them the disturbing humility which Christ's act has for His disciples. Here again a religious image serves to illustrate Goetz's failure to establish a relationship of reciprocal trust and love with other men.

Finally, we get a more oblique use of the image of the leper-kiss in *L'Age de Raison*. Mathieu returns to Marcelle's room after successfully rifling Lola's trunk. He has the 5,000 francs necessary to pay for the abortion, and he is imperceptive enough to think that Marcelle will share his relief that the operation can now be performed. Marcelle, however, has been deceived by Daniel into anticipating marriage, and so she awaits Mathieu's arrival eagerly. When he comes in, Marcelle notices the filthy bandage on his hand. She peels it off and, in an excess of gratitude and humility, presses her lips to Mathieu's wound which is dirty and has been suppurating (*AR*, 286). Here the force of the image as a vehicle of profound love is shattered by the ironical knowledge, which we possess but of which Marcelle is unaware, of Mathieu's true intentions. We are again made conscious of man's failure to achieve union with another person.

We may characterize these images as symbolizing either abortive attempts to transcend the instability of consciousness and so reach fixity and plenitude of being or as failures to achieve fraternal union with other persons.<sup>5</sup> These images normally and conventionally represent absolutes of love, suffering, and humility; but, in varying degrees, Sartre uses them ironically so as to suggest hopelessly defective experiences, most of them rooted in *mauvaise foi*. The images are, in a word, thematically related to Sartre's concepts of transcendence and bad faith and to his notions of the conflict inherent in all personal relations. However, what is distinctive about these images is that they are deliberately distorted religious symbols. I feel that the key to Sartre's repeated choice of this particular kind of image is to be found in the dogmatic atheism which pervades his work.<sup>6</sup> If he has chosen to locate certain abortive human aspirations in these images, it is because there seems to him no solution beyond the human. Religious experience appears as another, and perhaps the ultimate, variety of "bad faith": an escape from the responsibilities of human freedom with all that the latter implies in the way of being contingent and unjustifiable. What, in fact, we sense behind these images is the pressure of an atheism which is not simply dogmatic but is also something of an overt challenge to the Christian belief in God. Sartre has put his position beyond doubt:

le monde est évidemment absurde et tout s'achève pour nous à la mort. C'est parce qu'ils ont peur de cette existence gratuite, c'est pour s'assurer une récompense dans l'au-delà que les hommes ont inventé un Dieu. Mais pour nous qui regardons la vie en face, il n'y a pas à s'occuper de ces chimères. Vous vous trompez quand vous m'accusez d'être contre Dieu: comment serait-on contre ce qui n'est pas? Je suis sans Dieu et j'en suis fier.<sup>7</sup>

It is the force of this challenge which, I suggest, gives rise to specifically sacrilegious imagery in Sartre's fiction.

In order to understand the fear of metamorphosis which informs a whole group of Sartre's images, we need to recall the central dichotomy that marks his philosophical scheme. Sartre distinguishes two modes of being. The being of consciousness, to which he gives the name *l'être-pour-soi*, is radically different from the being of the phenomenon, which he calls *l'être-en-soi*. Consciousness impresses itself on the subject as a mode of being which is *not* the being of the phenomenon. In other words, consciousness enters into significant relationships with objects precisely because it can detach itself from what is other than itself. *L'être-en-soi* is itself and nothing else. It is opaque,

<sup>5</sup> Kenneth Douglas, p. 130, interprets in just these terms, the "self-inflicted wounds" which he isolates.

<sup>6</sup> Sartre's atheism is an *a priori* standpoint, as he himself obligingly confesses: "je ne pensais pas être moins métaphysicien en refusant à Dieu l'existence que Leibniz en la lui accordant." "Matérialisme et révolution," *Les Temps Modernes*, No. 9 (June, 1946), p. 1540.

<sup>7</sup> Sartre in a conversation with Roger Troisfontaines, reported in R. Troisfontaines, *Le Choix de Jean-Paul Sartre*, 2<sup>e</sup> édition (Paris: Aubier, 1946), p. 86, note. Italics in the text.



massive, stable, and absolutely contingent, whereas consciousness is flickering, unstable, and constantly straining out so as to achieve the dense stability of brute being (*l'être-en-soi*). This, by its very nature, it cannot do, and so it is perpetually frustrated: "conscience malheureuse" (EN, 134). The position which the body occupies in this scheme of things is highly ambiguous. It is not just another thing in Nature, since it is irradiated with consciousness; but, insofar as it is stable and solid, it is part of the realm of brute being. Sartre describes this feature of the body as its "facticity" (EN, 419).

Now, just as the key existentialist mood is nausea, the sudden intuition that one shares in the general contingency, so viscosity is the key image of human life, rendering most perfectly its ambiguity and its tendency to be tensed between consciousness and the body's facticity: "Mais aussitôt le visqueux se révèle essentiellement comme louche, parce que la fluidité existe chez lui au ralenti; il est empatement de la liquidité, c'est-à-dire il représente en lui-même un triomphe naissant du solide sur le liquide" (EN, 698-99). A viscous substance that melts into itself appears to offer a sort of resistance, a reluctance to be merged. Its very softness is significant: "car le *moi* n'est pas autre chose qu'un anéantissement qui s'arrête à mi-chemin" (EN, 700).

Consciousness is compromised by contact with a viscous substance, and the subject of this contact experiences a sort of giddiness under the tactile fascination offered by the substance. The viscous is then revealed as a trap: "il y a des possessions vénéneuses; il y a possibilité que l'En-soi absorbe le Pour-soi" (EN, 701). The stickiness of the substance as it adheres to the subject's hands holds him fast and seems to prolong itself in him. He sees the tendrils of the substance as symbolizing "une coulée de moi-même vers le visqueux," and he fears being diluted in the viscous mess, the mere contact with which affects him "comme la hantise d'une métamorphose" (EN, 702).

This extraordinary passage, with its feverish undertones and dramatic momentum, is idiosyncratic to the point of eccentricity in its interpretation of the viscous state. It reads more like an excerpt from a "thriller" than an integral part of a philosophical treatise, but it is precisely because it forms part of such a treatise that its affective tonality cannot be ignored. This tonality reveals how powerfully the notion of metamorphosis affects Sartre's imagination. Viscosity is clearly a metaphor about the human condition. In suggesting the incipient triumph of solid over liquid, it hints at the possibility of consciousness "seizing up," falling into mere "thinghood," and so being transformed. Hence the idea of a transformation or metamorphosis is associated with a "fall" out of the sphere of strict and lucid consciousness into the realm of brute being, the realm of glut and gratuitousness which Sartre identifies with Nature.

That is why we sometimes discover in Sartre's fiction that this general notion of metamorphosis finds expression in a viscous image.

There is a striking example in *L'Age de Raison* when Mathieu is walking through Paris in search of the money to pay for Marcelle's abortion:

L'été. Le ciel hantait la rue, c'est un minéral fantôme; les gens flottaient dans le ciel et leurs visages flambaient. Mathieu respira une odeur verte et vivante, une jeune poussière; il cligna les yeux et sourit. "L'Été!" Il fit quelque pas; le goudron noir et fondant, piqué de grains blancs colla à ses semelles: Marcelle était enceinte; ce n'était plus le même été. (AR, 52-53)

Here we pass from an image of light, conveying the idea of transcendence, through an image of viscosity to a reference to pregnancy with all it implies of the proliferating world of Nature.

The notion of metamorphosis finds more direct expression on a number of occasions when Sartre wishes to emphasize that men are no longer masters of the situation. Freedom is, for the moment, in abeyance: consciousness functions imperfectly. On these occasions, men "fall" into Nature and appear transformed into natural phenomena. A defeated French soldier wakes from sleep: "Un légume blanc sortit de terre" (MDA, 39). A man feels the situation slip out of his control and senses he is reduced to an object in the gaze of others: "la foule l'entourait, sous le ciel clair et vide, je hais les foules, il sentait des yeux partout, des soleils qui faisaient éclore des fleurs dans son dos, sur son ventre . . ." (S, 161). Other soldiers, caught by their defeat in a sort of stasis, already acquire something of the aspect of inanimate things as they smile with "des sourires végétaux" (MDA, 252). This metamorphosis reaches its extreme point when the news of the armistice makes it clear to the French troops that the future, the true dimension of freedom (since it alone permits consciousness to engage in its characteristic activity of "projecting" itself), is no longer in their hands. Without this distinctive human power, the soldiers are transformed into solid and inert things in Mathieu's eyes: "Il regarda ses camarades, son regard périssable rencontra sur eux le regard éternel et médusant de l'histoire: pour la première fois la grandeur était descendue sur leurs têtes: ils étaient les soldats fabuleux d'une guerre perdue. Statufiés!" (MDA, 69).

The obsession with being transformed from human into sub-human or non-human finds its most sinister expression in Sartre's insect imagery. It is, of course, perfectly true that insect imagery has been widely used in fiction in order to express vividly man's physical and mental abasement,<sup>8</sup> but what we meet in Sartre's work is the fusion of imaginative detail and philosophical theme. The two elements coalesce, and the image ceases to be a general one about human abasement and embodies instead a particular and recurring metaphysical notion, that of man being merged with the brute contingency of

<sup>8</sup> For example, by Malraux in *Le Temps du Mépris*, as is pointed out by G. O. Rees, "Animal Imagery in the Novels of André Malraux," *French Studies*, IX (1955), 135.

Nature.<sup>9</sup> At the root of the insect imagery we can detect an obsession which Sartre has expressed elsewhere in philosophical language: "Si l'on considère la Nature du point de vue de l'Idée, on ne peut échapper à cette obsession: l'indistinction du possible et du réel, qu'on retrouve à un moindre degré dans le rêve du dormeur et qui est la caractéristique de l'Etre en soi."<sup>10</sup>

It is clear from Sartre's own allusions that he has been deeply impressed by Kafka's account of the terrifying change experienced by Gregor Samsa in *The Metamorphosis*. He refers to this source explicitly in his pamphlet on Henri Martin<sup>11</sup> and returns to it when discussing Jean Genet's early life: "L'enfant sage s'est transformé soudain en voyou comme Grégoire Samsa en vermine" (*SG*, 10). Sartre has not simply borrowed this symbolic metamorphosis for pure effect. He utilizes it because the symbol corresponds faithfully with his own philosophical insights.

This does not prevent him from occasionally exploiting the imagery of metamorphosis as a surrealist effect. In *La Nausée*, for instance, when Roquentin falls asleep after making love to the cashier of the *Rendez-vous des cheminots*, his dream is of vermin, actual—"des fourmis . . . des mille-pattes et des teignes"—or surrealist—"Il y avait des bêtes encore plus horribles: leur corps était fait d'une tranche de pain grillé comme on en met en canapé sous les pigeons . . ." (*N*, 88-89). The image recurs in the context of a sort of surrealist apocalypse which Roquentin envisages for the hated town of Bouville: "Et il s'approchera d'une glace, ouvrira la bouche; et sa langue sera devenue un énorme mille-pattes tout vif, qui tricoterait des pattes et lui raclerait le palais" (*N*, 224). Here the real horror of a metamorphosis has been transposed on to the plane of fantasy and so loses its impact. Roquentin is the isolated and impotent critic of bourgeois society, expressing his frustration in a destructive fantasy. The general tone of the passage and much of the surrealist detail is ironical and suggests an intellectual diversion rather than a genuine vision of destruction.<sup>12</sup>

Elsewhere in *La Nausée* the fear of metamorphosis seems to me to have all the compulsion of a true obsession, as when Roquentin stares at his own face in the mirror and sees it as some alien and anomalous thing (*N*, 31). Certainly the impact of the majority of Sartre's insect images is harsh and disturbing, and, appropriately, the incidence of

<sup>9</sup> I feel that Stephen Ullmann inadequately relates image and theme when he simply associates such imagery with "that mood of nausea which, according to the existentialists, is an essential stage in man's spiritual development." *Style in the French Novel* (Cambridge, Eng., 1957), p. 252.

<sup>10</sup> "L'homme et les choses," reprinted in *Situations I* (Paris: Gallimard, 1947), p. 261. Italics in the text.

<sup>11</sup> *L'Affaire Henri Martin: Commentaire de Jean-Paul Sartre* (Paris: Gallimard, 1953), p. 121.

<sup>12</sup> It is these passages that point to the element of surrealist "pastiche" which Robert Champigny rightly detects in *La Nausée*. See his article, "Sens de *La Nausée*," *PMLA*, LXX (1955), 45.

such images is especially high in *La Mort dans l'Ame*, which has for its central and animating theme the French defeat of 1940. In defeat men are no longer capable of engaging in those projects which are characteristic of human consciousness. Freedom cannot function when it is locked in a present from which there seems no issue. The passivity of men in defeat recalls the inertia of Nature as it is viewed by Sartre and evokes the life of Nature. The life of insects and the predicament of defeated men are identified with each other:

Sous ses mains, sous ses fesses, Mathieu sentait la vie enchevêtrée de l'herbe, des insectes et de la terre, une grande chevelure rêche et mouillée, pleine de poux; c'était l'angoisse nue sous ses paumes. Coincés! Des millions d'hommes coincés entre les Vosges et le Rhin par l'impossibilité d'être hommes. . . . (MDA, 131)

Defeated soldiers cease to be agents and are seen as vermin: "Les abjectes vermines qui souillaient cette belle journée de juin" (MDA, 84). The image is multiplied. Soldiers become "cette larve grise" (MDA, 85) or "la bête aux deux cents pattes" (MDA, 89) or "la longue chenille" (MDA, 204). Members of the Resistance under torture are tempted to believe they have ceased to be men, that they have undergone an appalling change. They felt "qu'ils n'étaient que des insectes, que l'homme est le rêve impossible des cafards et des cloportes et qu'ils se réveilleraient vermine comme tout le monde."<sup>13</sup> Civilian refugees in flight and at the mercy of war are less than human: "nous ne sommes plus que des pattes de cette interminable vermine" (MDA, 24). The extreme helplessness of Sarah and Pablo as they watch the stream of cars and refugees go by is expressed in extended insect imagery: "Ils s'assirent dans l'herbe. Les insectes rampaient devant eux, énormes, lents, mystérieux . . . les autos grinçaient comme des homards, chantaient comme des grillons. Les hommes ont été changés en insectes" (MDA, 21).

In the same way, defeat affects the actual processes of consciousness. When men stop being free agents, envisaging the future perspectives in which they are to act, their consciousness is not simply depicted as "seizing up" and so lapsing into the dense stability of being-in-itself, but, more precisely, it is described as being invested with insect life: "nous sommes le rêve d'une vermine, nos pensées s'épaississent, deviennent de moins en moins humaines; des pensées velues, pattues courent partout, sautent d'une tête à l'autre: la vermine va se réveiller" (MDA, 89). There are some curious extensions of this usage. Consciousness at a low ebb calls up the teeming life of insects. It is described as "égarée, flottant comme un brouillard de chaleur, une pensée de mouche ou de cancrelat" (AR, 176). A soldier who is dead-drunk and whose consciousness, therefore, is as near as possible in abeyance, is fascinated by the song which comes, as if unbidden, out of his mouth: "il regardait avec stupeur cette

<sup>13</sup> "Qu'est-ce que la littérature?" in *Situations II* (Paris: Gallimard, 1948), p. 248.

vermine qui lui sortait de la bouche" (*MDA*, 106). The most extreme development of this image occurs, not in a work of fiction but in one of Sartre's discursive writings. Here a contrast is established between ends, as involving the exercise of free projects and so being linked with the future, and means, envisaged as a surrender to present necessities. In this context, means are compared with "des cloportes."<sup>14</sup>

Sacrilege and metamorphosis: in isolating these two images, I hope to have shown something of the force of Sartre's imaginative expression and of the degree to which his philosophic notions permeate his imagination and help to shape his use of language.

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<sup>14</sup> "Qu'est-ce que la littérature?" in *Situations II*, pp. 286-87.

# THE IMAGERY OF CONFINEMENT AND WEIGHT IN THE WORKS OF SAINT EXUPÉRY

By ABRAM TAFFEL

Baudelaire, in an essay on Banville,<sup>1</sup> makes the following observation: "Pour deviner l'âme d'un poète ou du moins sa principale préoccupation, cherchons dans ses œuvres quel est le mot ou quels sont les mots qui s'y représentent avec le plus de fréquence. Le mot traduira l'obsession. . . ." This reflection is strikingly pertinent to the works of Saint Exupéry. As has been noted in several studies,<sup>2</sup> an important aspect of this writer's attitude toward life is an inner conflict between two tendencies: one dynamic, the other static; one, an urge for freedom and untrammelled movement, the other, a longing for stability and security. Such assertions as "La vie n'est pas énonçable par des états mais par des démarches" in *Pilote de Guerre* (p. 210) are frequently countered by others like "Je hais ce qui change" in *Citadelle* (p. 25).<sup>3</sup> The various nuances in the interplay of these two points of view are reflected by a number of words, representing the rather prosaic concepts of confinement and weight, which

<sup>1</sup> Charles P. Baudelaire, *Œuvres*, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade (Paris, 1935), II, 546.

<sup>2</sup> See (a) Jacques Fermaud, "L'Inquiétude chez Antoine de Saint Exupéry," *PMLA*, LXI (1946), 1206: "Il lui faut donc réconcilier cette nostalgie de la vie douce et protégée avec son amour de la vie active et libératrice."

(b) Philip A. Wadsworth, "Saint Exupéry, Artist and Humanist," *MLQ*, XII (1951), 100: "two incompatible conceptions of happiness, that of the adventurer, with no ties but his work and his comrades of the air, and that of the 'people back home,' rooted in tradition, clinging to their house. . . ."

(c) Georges Pélissier, *Les Cinq Visages de Saint Exupéry* (Paris, 1951), p. 98: "Et maintenant apparaissent les deux notions qu'on peut croire antinomiques de contrainte et de liberté."

(d) Renée C. Zeller, *L'Homme et le Navire d'Antoine de Saint Exupéry* (Paris, 1951), p. 66: "Les deux éléments de soumission et d'intransigeance héroïques lui semblent inséparables dans l'homme."

(e) Jean-Claude Ibert, *Antoine de Saint Exupéry*, Editions Universitaires (Paris, 1953), pp. 85-86: "Saint Exupéry s'est défini à travers les personnages comme s'il y avait en lui deux êtres qui se combattent en amis."

(f) Richard Rumbold and Lady Margaret Stewart, *The Winged Life: A Portrait of Antoine de Saint Exupéry, Poet and Airman* (London, 1953), p. 22: "a constant inner conflict . . . between his restless craving for adventure and the longing for the patterned and ordered existence of his childhood."

<sup>3</sup> The following works of Saint Exupéry, frequently mentioned in this article, will henceforth be designated by the abbreviations indicated below:

CS: *Courrier sud* (Paris: N. R. F., Librairie Gallimard, 1929)

VN: *Vol de nuit* (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1931)

TH: *Terre des hommes* (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1939)

PG: *Pilote de Guerre* (New York: Editions de la Maison Française, Inc., 1942)

LO: *Lettre à un otage* (New York: Brentano's, 1943)

C: *Citadelle* (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1948)

appear with great frequency in the richly poetic language of Saint Exupéry.

The yearning for freedom is suggested in a profusion of images of confinement, the most prominent of which is that of imprisonment. People are perceived as prisoners of themselves, of their tasks, of their past, and of their loved ones. Bernis finds that his former acquaintances "tous étaient prisonniers d'eux-mêmes . . ." (CS, 56). The airmail pilots stationed in the desert are "prisonniers des sables" (TH, 89). Saint Exupéry, viewing his childhood home from his plane, muses, "Vous êtes prisonnier d'une pelouse, dans un parc endormi" (TH, 79). And a mother is considered similarly bound by her devotion to her child: "Cette mère qui berçait un enfant, qui en était déjà prisonnière, qui ne pouvait fuir" (CS, 57). One of the most vivid images of this type is that of a mouse, unaware that it has been glimpsed by a hawk: "La souris s' imagine vivre. Elle folâtre encore dans les blés. Mais elle est déjà prisonnière de la rétine de l'épervier, mieux collée à cette rétine qu'à une glu car l'épervier ne la lâchera plus" (PG, 73).

In addition to such words as *prison*, *prisonnier*, etc., Saint Exupéry uses others which have less direct, but unmistakable, connotations of confinement. *Collée* and *glu*, in the passage just quoted, adding the concept of helpless ensnarement to that of confinement, are pertinent examples of this type. It is indicative of the consistency with which these images reflect the author's thoughts and feelings that, though he shows no intention of relating the two incidents, the parallel between the situation of the mouse referred to above and that of the camel drivers becomes evident because of his use of almost identical imagery: "Collés à cette glu de lumière, ils croient marcher, engloutis déjà dans l'éternité, ils croient vivre . . ." (C, 18). The clinging connotation of *glu* also appears in other cases, such as a reference to the "souvenir gluant" that Saint Exupéry expects to retain of his heartbreaking view (PG, 116) of the French people's flight from the invaders. *Piège*, another concept of ensnarement, is used on many occasions. For example, an assassin is petrified before the body of his victim "pris au piège d'un silence dont il était lui-même la cause . . ." (C, 17). Words like those used in describing the pilots "pris . . . dans le Sahara comme dans une *gangué*" (CS, 19)<sup>4</sup> and the habitués of a "dancing" in Paris, living their lives "dans cette *enceinte* comme des goujons dans un *aquarium*" (CS, 54-55), illustrate further the great variety of this type of imagery.

The same concept is applied to man's physical needs, which are sometimes represented as bonds hampering his freedom. A harrowing ordeal in the desert reveals to Saint Exupéry the extent of man's subjection to his need for water. In a passage in *Terre des hommes*, p. 178, again reflecting the author's vexation not only at man's limita-

<sup>4</sup> The italics are mine.



tions but also at his frequent obliviousness to them, this type of constraint is symbolized by the umbilical cord: "On croit que l'homme est libre. . . . On ne voit pas la corde qui le rattache au puits, qui le rattache, comme un cordon ombilical, au ventre de la terre. . . ."

In contrast to the above examples, in which a tone of chafing at constraint reflects Saint Exupéry's frustrated urge for freedom, other images of this type, prompted by the opposite inclination to repose and security, have comforting and satisfying connotations. Such words as *lier* and *nouer* are used frequently to designate bonds which attach man to his environment and to his fellow man. A gardener is "lié d'amour à toutes les terres et à tous les arbres de la terre" (TH, 56). The author considers another such attachment as indispensable as one's breath: "Liés à nos frères par un but commun . . . alors seulement nous respirons . . ." (TH, 202). It raises one to a higher spiritual plane, affording "le droit de . . . participer. D'être lié. . . . D'être plus que soi-même . . ." (PG, 192), and is the basis of communal unity as exemplified by a community in *Citadelle*, p. 35; France, also, is referred to as "un réseau de liens" (LO, 30).

The author's ambivalent reaction to the concept of confinement is reflected by an equally ambivalent use of certain of his images to create agreeable impressions in some instances and disagreeable ones in others. The word *gangué*, cited above in an unpleasant connotation, becomes the matrix from which the matured form is to emerge: "une forme parfaitement épanouie, enfin dégagée de sa gangué . . ." (TH, 60). A dead peasant woman surrounded by her mourning sons is similarly described as "une gangué dont on a retiré le fruit" (TH, 212). The umbilical cord, used in a restrictive sense elsewhere, here symbolizes the grieving sons' affectionate attachment to their mother: "Pour la seconde fois, était tranché le cordon ombilical . . ." (TH, 211).

This sheltering aspect of confinement, this protective incubation before maturity and release, is also rendered by the image of the chrysalis. In *Citadelle*, p. 68, the ruler wishes that men, "dépouillés d'eux-mêmes et sortis de leur chrysalide . . . sentent . . . s'ouvrir en eux des ailes." Similarly an old bus seems "une chrysalide grise dont l'homme sortirait transfiguré" (TH, 20) and a flier emerges from his plane "comme d'une chrysalide" (CS, 204).

A final group of confinement images, suggesting the author's wish to reconcile the two conflicting forces of his nature, represents a confining vehicle in motion. The airplane in the above quotation serves this function. The image of a train is also used in this way: "la patrie en marche où je m'enfermais . . . prisonnier pour trois jours de ce bruit de galets roulés par la mer . . ." (TH, 214). Saint Exupéry suggests the joining of the two conflicting tendencies even more clearly in *Courrier sud*, p. 108, where he emphasizes the concurrent experiencing of change and sameness, of the dynamic and the static: "Chaque seconde que l'on subit jette en arrière maisons, forêts, vil-

lages. Pourtant, si l'on ouvre les yeux de sa couchette on ne voit qu'un anneau de cuivre, toujours le même. . . ."

The image of the ship, which is used quite often, usually assumes the larger symbolic significance of the vessel that carries man through life. A ruler, for example, views himself as "le bac qui a reçu de Dieu une génération en gage et la passe d'une rive à l'autre . . ." (C, 26). The ancestral home received a man at birth "et le transportait jusqu'à la mort, puis comme un bon navire d'une rive à l'autre elle faisait à son tour passer le fils . . ." (PG, 115). Geneviève thinks in the same way of her home and of its furniture: "Ce qui peut vous porter longtemps comme un navire . . ." (CS, 109) and of the reassuring solidity of "ces tables massives qui pouvaient traverser les siècles sans démoder ni vieillir . . ." (CS, 111).

The concept of heaviness, discernible in the last quotation, is most frequently conveyed by the word families of *lourdeur* and *pesanteur*. Like the concept of confinement, it appears very frequently and in a great diversity of connotations. Its incidence is so great that it seems to border on an obsession. The following observation, quoted from Saint Exupéry's preface to the French translation of A. M. Lindbergh's *Listen the Wind* (*Le Vent se lève*)<sup>5</sup>—which, incidentally, is strikingly similar to Baudelaire's observation quoted at the beginning of this article—shows how much this concept engrossed him:

J'ai cru remarquer que, chaque fois qu'une œuvre présentait une cohérence profonde, elle était presque toujours réductible à une commune mesure élémentaire. Je me souviens d'un film dont l'héroïsme, à l'insu du metteur en scène, était d'abord la pesanteur. Tout pesait dans ce film. L'atavisme pesait sur un empereur dégénéré, les lourdes fourrures d'hiver pesaient sur les épaules, d'écrasantes responsabilités pesaient sur le premier ministre. Les portes elles-mêmes, tout au long du film, étaient pesantes. Et l'on voyait dans la dernière image le vainqueur, écrasé par une lourde victoire, gravir lentement un escalier sombre, vers la lumière. Certes, cette commune mesure n'était point le fait d'un parti pris. L'auteur n'y avait pas songé. Mais qu'il fût possible de la dégager était la marque d'une continuité souterraine.

It may be observed that in this paragraph Saint Exupéry uses only two of the words denoting heaviness in their literal sense—those referring to the furs and to the doors. The others, depicting the emperor weighed down by his atavism, the prime minister by his responsibilities, and the victor by his "lourde victoire," show Saint Exupéry's own inclination to think in these terms rather than any truly intrinsic heaviness in the situations.

The idea of heaviness abounds in his writings in the literal as well as in the figurative sense. The roses in *Courrier sud*, p. 77, "pèsent lourd." There is a "caisse lourde d'objets absurdes" (TH, 115), and there are "nuages lourds" (VN, 69). This quality is also noted frequently in situations involving aviators. In *Terre des hommes*, p. 12, the pilot "mangeait lourdement." The author uses weight concepts

<sup>5</sup> In Antoine de Saint Exupéry, *Un Sens à la vie* (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1956), p. 251. (A collection of his miscellaneous writings.)

to describe his settling himself in his plane: "Quant à mon poids, il s'est distribué sur des points d'appui. Ma triple épaisseur de vêtements superposés, mon lourd parachute dorsal pèsent contre le siège . . ." (PG, 45). Heaviness also pervades the portrayal of Fabien's leave-taking from his wife as he prepares for a plane mission: "plus il devenait lourd, plus elle l'admirait. . . . Il . . . la serra contre ses pesants vêtements . . ." (VN, 96-97).

When used figuratively, many of the images of weight are associated with philosophical reflections. They help express a sombre view of life in a desperate situation: "ce poids de la vie à traîner quand on va comme un bœuf, et qu'elle se fait plus lourde qu'un char . . ." (TH, 51) or the burdensomeness of responsibility: "Pesa sur mon cœur le poids du monde comme si j'en avais la charge . . ." (C, 144). In a more optimistic mood, they underscore the author's assessment of man's physical power, such as the portrayal of an aviator daunting a storm: "ces mains fermées sur les commandes, pesaient déjà sur la tempête, comme sur la nuque d'une bête . . ." (VN, 72); or of the winning of a moral victory: "Et il sentait sa propre force ramassée en lui comme un poids: 'Mes raisons pèsent, je vaincrai,' pensait Rivière . . ." (VN, 105).

On other occasions they emphasize some special importance noted by the author: the "lourde signification" of a plane's failure to arrive at the scheduled time (TH, 38); the increased stature and implied symbolic significance of a shepherd guiding his course by the stars, "lourd d'une science qui n'est point partagée aux brebis . . ." (TH, 114); or the richer content of certain words: "les mots les plus lourds, comme 'tendresse,' 'amour' . . ." (CS, 172).

There are also instances in which the images of weight, manifesting another of the author's predominant preoccupations, connote a sense of stability and security—a sense of being firmly anchored to a safe place. A good example is Saint Exupéry's rhapsodic description of his awakening at night in the desert with the vertiginous sensation of being suspended precariously above an abysmal star-studded sky: "Mais je ne tombai point. De la nuque aux talons je me découvrais noué à la terre. J'éprouvais une sorte d'apaisement à lui abandonner mon poids. La gravitation m'apparaissait souveraine comme l'amour" (TH, 73-74). He feels the earth carrying him through space: "Je me découvrais appliqué à l'astre, par une pesée semblable à cette pesée des virages qui vous appliquent au char, je goûtais cet épaulement admirable, cette solidité, cette sécurité, et je devinais, sous mon corps ce pont courbe de mon navire" (TH, 73-74).

Besides the images of weight, this passage contains some images of confinement, such as *noué*, *appliqué*, and *navire* which serve to heighten the impression of security. In the cases where such an association of the two image types occurs, the confinement concepts are usually expressed by words of binding and attachment. Saint Exupéry's account of his nocturnal experience in the desert demonstrates

this further: "Cette pesanteur me *lie* au sol quand tant d'étoiles sont aimantées. Une autre pesanteur me ramène à moi-même. Je sens mon poids qui me *tire* vers tant de choses . . ." (TH, 77). A similar relationship between weight and bonds appears in the same volume in the story of the shepherd, freed after many years of slavery, who finds his new freedom lacking in substance. He is *too* free—"jusqu'à ne plus se sentir peser sur terre. Il lui manquait ce poids des relations humaines qui entrave la marche . . . ces milles *liens* qui . . . *attachent* [un homme] aux autres et le rendent lourd . . ." (TH, 127-28). He feels that his weight as a member of the community depends on the numerousness of the bonds that attach him to others. When he acquires new responsibilities, he finally feels reestablished and "déjà pesait ici de son vrai poids. . ."

In these last two quotations we may note an important aspect of Saint Exupéry's attitude toward life. As we have seen above, the confinement images indicate a conflict in his nature between two opposing tendencies. To resolve this conflict, he attempts to arrive at a definition of the meaning of life, or "un sens à la vie," as he expresses it several times in his works. His weight imagery reflects his thoughts as he seeks to assess man's role. On some occasions, it shows his melancholy awareness of man's problems and responsibilities; on others, his appraisal of the material and spiritual importance of some of man's activities; and on still others, a feeling of gratification at having found an anchor that may afford him the security and the stability that at least part of his nature craves. This anchor proves to be the binding quality of human relations—a concept of confinement which, as we have seen, is sometimes represented by the umbilical cord, and most frequently by words like *lier*, *lien*, *nouer*, and *nœud*. Man's significance lies in his relationship with his fellow men: "L'homme n'est qu'un nœud de relations. Les relations comptent seules pour l'homme," he says (PG, 176). Therefore, both freedom and confinement must play a role in man's arriving at a satisfying fulfillment of his personality. "Liberté et contrainte sont deux aspects de la même nécessité qui est d'être celui-là et non un autre . . ." (C, 147).

This coupling of liberty and constraint is seen in tangible form in the vocation of Saint Exupéry. The plane is the physical embodiment of the conflicting tendencies we have been discussing. There can hardly be a more apt example of confinement than that of the pilot in his cockpit—or a better instance of a striving for liberation from the earth's hold than flying off into space. Weight, the physical manifestation of gravity's resistance to any effort to seek freedom from the earth's grip, takes its logical position in this group. The ambivalence of these images is equally evident. Saint Exupéry considers the confinement of the plane most frequently not as an irritating deterrent, but as a womb-like protection in anticipation of eventual liberation. Complete escape from the earth can never be accomplished, for the

pull of gravity, like the need for water in the desert, is an umbilical cord that keeps man inexorably attached "au ventre de la terre." Yet this does not always annoy Saint Exupéry, for much of his thinking while in flight is itself a link tying him to the earth. He thinks of his childhood home, of the different appearance of the earth when seen from a plane, of the myriad lights representing the homes below him, of the messages exchanged between himself and his earthbound associates. Indeed, it is in his flight over invaded France, in *Pilote de Guerre*, that he evolves his philosophy that the significance or "weight" of the individual is derived from his kinship or "bond" with his fellow men.

Thus, in Saint Exupéry's material existence as well as in his spiritual life, the concepts of confinement and weight play an essential role in representing all the aspects of his inner conflict—the problem, its emotional and philosophical ramifications, and its envisioned solution.

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## HEINE'S LETTER TO BOCAGE, SEPTEMBER 11, 1855

By STUART ATKINS

In the Carl M. Loeb Heine Collection of the Harvard College Library there is a letter of Heine to Bocage (Pierre-François Touzé<sup>1</sup>) which has previously been published only in part.<sup>2</sup> Although the full text of the letter adds only minor details to our knowledge of Heine's life—it suggests that Heine was in fairly close contact with the great actor and friend of George Sand at the time of his alienation from her because of her defense of Joseph Dessauer<sup>3</sup>—it demonstrates, as no other French letter from Heine's last six months does, sustained powers of literary-satirical composition. This is the letter.<sup>4</sup>

Mon cher Buridan de la tour de Nesle!

Vous aviez bien raison lorsque vous disiez: "Ah, ce sont de grandes dames!" Ces dames se permettent tout et quand elles ont assez de nous elles disent à leurs sicaires de nous jeter à la Seine. [Je vous en dirai davantage à la première visite que vous me ferez aussitôt possible, déjà demain si cela ne vous dérange pas trop.] Il y a déjà longtemps que je désire vous voir pour vous demander quelques renseignements dont j'ai besoin en ce moment où je m'occupe à refaire et à compléter, pour l'édition française de mes œuvres, un vieux travail sur les théâtres de Paris. Mais j'ai en outre besoin de vous parler en ce moment au sujet d'une personne qui fait de grandes bêtises et qui se conduit envers moi d'une manière indigne. [Vous vous êtes évertué, à notre dernière entrevue, de me faire croire à son amitié inaltérée, à ses regrets de n'avoir pu me voir, vous m'annonciez sa visite prochaine—pauvre Buridan, vous qui êtes si généreux vous ne pouviez croire à un manque de cœur chez les autres! Ah! ce sont de grandes dames! Seulement je ne suis pas l'homme qui se laisse facilement jeter dans la Seine.<sup>5</sup> Ne tardez pas à venir.

Votre tout dévoué admirateur]

Henri Heine

Paris ce 11<sup>e</sup>

Sept. 1855

3. avenue Matignon, Champs Elisées

Only the place, date, signature, and address are in Heine's hand; so also is the address on the accompanying envelope ("Monsieur / M<sup>r</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The identification of the addressee as Pierre Martinien Bocage in Heinrich Heine, *Briefe*, ed. Friedrich Hirth (III, 634) seems to follow the note of Ernst Elster in Heinrich Heine, *Sämtliche Werke*, IV, 529. In the index to the *Briefe* (VI, 395) Pierre Martinien Bocage is further identified as Pierre Martinien Tousez, but the actor's name is given in Lyonnet's *Dictionnaire des Comédiens Français* as Pierre-François Touzé.

<sup>2</sup> There is at least one misspelling in Heinrich Heine, *Briefwechsel*, ed. Hirth (No. 1141), but even in Hirth's the transcription is careless; the same omissions occur in both editions of the letter prepared by Hirth.

<sup>3</sup> See *Briefe*, VI, 244 ff., for the background of the Dessauer affair and for references to evidence of Heine's alienation from George Sand from 1847 on.

<sup>4</sup> Passages omitted in the Hirth editions of Heine's letters are enclosed in brackets. (Only the omission of the first bracketed passage is indicated in Hirth by suspension points.)

<sup>5</sup> In both *Briefwechsel* and *Briefe* this sentence is printed before the one beginning "Il y a déjà longtemps."

Bocage, artiste dramatique; aux soins du Conçierge du Theatre de la Porte Saint Martin / Paris").

The explanation (Hirth<sup>2</sup> VI, 254) that the salutation alludes to Bocage's success in the leading role of *La Tour de Nesle* does insufficient justice to Heine's effective use of literary allusion. As in *Florentinische Nächte*<sup>6</sup> and *Briefe über Deutschland*,<sup>7</sup> there is identification of the play with everything horrible ("alle Greuel") and of the tower itself with the brutal assassinations of a corrupt nobility. George Sand is equated, to be sure unjustly, with the legendarily licentious Margaret of Burgundy who, in the play of Gaillardet and Dumas, regularly ordered assassinated the handsome young men whom she would invite to secret orgies at the Tour de Nesle, letting their bodies then be cast into the Seine. More important, however, and nicely designed to undermine Bocage's confidence in George Sand, if anything could do this, is Heine's parodistic repetition of words which Bocage, in the part of Buridan, had declaimed a good 500 times on the Paris stage beginning May 29, 1832. For one of the most effective "tirades" of *La Tour de Nesle* is that in which Buridan begins to tell a young man who has, like himself, come to a rendezvous at the ill-omened tower that their situation is fraught with mortal danger:

N'avez-vous pas remarqué que ce doivent être de grandes dames? . . . Avez-vous remarqué ces riches habits, ces voix si douces, ces regards si faux? Ce sont de grandes dames, voyez-vous. . . . Oh! ce sont de grandes dames! A peine sommes-nous entrés dans cet endroit éblouissant, parfumé et chaud à enivrer, qu'elles nous ont accueilli avec milles tendresses. . . . Vous voyez bien que ce sont de grandes dames. A table . . . elles ont blasphémé, elles ont tenu d'étranges discours et dit d'odieuses paroles, elles ont oublié toute retenue, toute pudeur. . . . Ce sont de grandes dames, de très-grandes dames, je vous le répète. (From Act I, Scene ix, abbreviated.<sup>8</sup>)

Without its last sentences and their repetition of the phrase "Ah, ce sont de grandes dames!", the fact that Heine's letter is modeled on a "tirade" famous in the history of French romantic melodrama is to all intents and purposes completely concealed. Making no direct charges of any kind, Heine nevertheless insinuates to the literarily initiated that George Sand has treated him like a discarded lover and is assassinating his character if not his person. Since the letter to Bocage is dated shortly after final publication of her *Histoire de ma vie* (20 volumes, Paris, 1854-55), it seems highly probable that Heine was reacting specifically to the footnote on page 213 of the final volume, added in connection with her favorable account of Dessauer, which disposed of Heine's charges against her friend with the sentence, "Le génie a ses rêves de malade."

Heine's remembering of *La Tour de Nesle* in connection with George Sand is best explained by the fact that in the unpublished

<sup>6</sup> *Sämtliche Werke*, IV, 361.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 532 and 533.

<sup>8</sup> Alexandre Dumas, *La Tour de Nesle: Drame en cinq actes et en prose* (Bruxelles, 1842), pp. 29-30.



*Briefe über Deutschland* which Heine reworked and incorporated into early pages of his *Geständnisse* (late 1853 or early 1854) he had interrupted a passage on Madame de Staël to mention, in complimentary contrast, several living French women writers, among these George Sand—all this between two references to the Tour de Nesle that at the time (the early 1840's) still had considerable topical relevance. These digressions were omitted when Heine rewrote the material for *Geständnisse*. But as he came to feel that George Sand was attacking him as maliciously as Madame de Staël had attacked Napoleon, he skillfully utilized, in writing to the one person who would still certainly understand a reference to the stage hit of twenty years before, with new fullness and more literary wit the allusion to *La Tour de Nesle* that he had been constrained to omit from *Geständnisse* for the sake of structural tightness and ready comprehensibility.

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TEXTUAL PROBLEMS IN  
GERHART HAUPTMANN'S *DER GROSSE TRAUM*

By KARL S. GUTHKE

Hauptmann liked to call his *terza rima* epic, *Der Grosse Traum*, his *Faust* and thought that he could not give anything "Letzteres" than this "Weltgedicht." It is undoubtedly Hauptmann's major work.<sup>1</sup> Prior to the edition under discussion here, it was accessible only in the version printed for the first time in the *Ausgabe letzter Hand* (ALH), XVI (1942). Additional material, either omitted or relegated to a second part when Hauptmann revised the poem for inclusion in the collected works, was known to exist. It is, therefore, with great interest that one opens Hans Reisiger's new edition of *Der Grosse Traum*<sup>2</sup> which is based on the typescript (TS) that the poet used in his revision of the text for the ALH and thus brings to light a wealth of hitherto unpublished material. It is introduced by Rudolf Alexander Schröder's preface, written with the sympathy of a friend and the understanding of a creative writer. His main point is that Hauptmann could be called a naturalist in the broader sense of the word in which it might also apply to, say, Goethe.

The bulk of the unprinted portions of the epic is formed by six cantos of the second part of the poem. They are all exactly dated (1936) and set off from the first part by a marked gap in the narrative. Although at least two cantos are left unfinished, they constitute a fairly coherent sequence of dreams; but, incomplete as the second part remains, it is not equal to the first in thought content and visionary scope. And, ironically, this so-called complete edition of *Der Grosse Traum* actually does not contain the entirety of the extant text: Hauptmann's friend and biographer C. F. W. Behl kindly informed me that there are more cantos of the second part which Reisiger apparently was not aware of at all.

Serious problems of a different nature arise, however, from the editor's handling of the first part of the epic. This contains twenty-two cantos in the ALH, but thirty in the TS (which counts the "Widmung" as "Gesang I"). There were, one should think, two possibilities for the editor: he could have reprinted the ALH version with an appendix containing variants and those additional passages

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of *Der Grosse Traum*, see my article, "Die Mythologie des späten Gerhart Hauptmann," *Monatshefte* (Wisconsin), November, 1957, pp. 289-303; also F. B. Wahr, "Comments on Gerhart Hauptmann's *Der Grosse Traum*," *Germanic Review*, XXVIII (1953), 42-54.

<sup>2</sup> Gerhart Hauptmann, *Der Grosse Traum*, herausgegeben von Hans Reisiger mit einem Nachwort von Rudolf Alexander Schröder (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1956), 285 pp.

of the TS which Hauptmann rejected when he worked out the final version (*ALH*); or, he could have printed the text of the TS, indicating the cancellations and rearrangements of the *ALH*.

Reisiger follows neither of these possible methods but, in a way, combines both. As a result, the reader does not get a clear idea of what the TS Reisiger is "editing" really looked like. To be sure, Reisiger adheres to the TS in orthography and punctuation, which differ somewhat from the *ALH*. But then, like *ALH*, he excludes TS Cantos 7, 12, 13, 31, and parts of 14, as well as a four-line fragmentary "Gesang" (which he does not bother to number), because these are incomplete and do not seem to fit in. On the other hand, he follows the TS in putting the thirteen Walther Rathenau *terza rimas* into Canto XX, while the *ALH* does not print them; but here his procedure is justified since it was clearly not for artistic reasons that the author left out this portion in the printed version of 1942. Then again, in the not insignificant first line of Canto XXII, Reisiger chooses the *ALH* version, discarding the deviation of the TS for no apparent reason.<sup>3</sup> The same is true of a passage in Reisiger's Canto XIV.<sup>4</sup>

While in these instances one might possibly still agree with such methodological inconsistencies, doubts become more serious if one examines Reisiger's arrangement of cantos, which is, as a matter of fact, quite arbitrary. He includes in his text three hitherto unknown cantos of the TS (25, 26, 28) which Hauptmann did not incorporate into his final *ALH*. (Reisiger's chief reason for insertion is that these cantos are completed. His criterion for completeness is the existence of the separate line with which Hauptmann concludes each finished canto of *Der Grosse Traum*. This criterion, however, is elusive: the last separate line can just as well be the last line of a fragment as that of a complete canto. Thus, Canto XX in the *ALH* was evidently incomplete since it omitted the thirteen Rathenau *terza rimas* at the end, but nevertheless the fragment ends with a separate line!)

Setting aside, for a moment, the question of the justification of the insertion as such, strong objection must be made to the entirely new sequence of cantos formed by or connected with Reisiger's insertions. Cantos I-XVII correspond to each other in the *ALH* and in the new edition. But if we designate the cantos of the TS by arabic numerals, the *ALH* (Cantos XVII ff.) has the following sequence:

<i>ALH</i>	XVII	XVIII	XIX	XX	XXI	XXII
TS	24	19	20	22	29	30

But Reisiger arranges them as follows:

<i>ALH</i>	XVII	XVIII	XIX	XX	XXI	XXII	XXIII	XXIV	XXV
TS	24	25	26	22	28	29	19	20	30

<sup>3</sup> *ALH*, p. 391; Reisiger, pp. 192 and 261.

<sup>4</sup> See Reisiger, p. 281.

It is obvious that only the arrangements in the TS and in the *ALH* have Hauptmann's approval. Reisiger restores the order of the TS in XVII-XIX (TS 24-26) and in XXI-XXII (TS 28-29). Then, however, his rearrangement connects 26 and 22, 22 and 28, 29 and 19, and 20 and 30. Yet all of these combinations are without precedent either in the TS or in the *ALH* and can, therefore, not be considered as being in accordance with the poet's intentions at any stage of the work. To be sure, in two of these cases there exists a verbal connection between the cantos joined in this arbitrary manner; but then it has to be remembered that the cantos frequently lack explicit connection in Hauptmann's arrangement, nor do they need any, "weil seine (des Traumes) Bilderflut chaotisch drängt."<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, the narrative connection between Reisiger's Cantos XVI and XXIII is very close, but the editor ignores this inconsistency as a "kleinen Haken." Instead of giving us either of the extant versions, Reisiger thus works out a sequence of his own which has no basis whatsoever in the poet's two arrangements of the cantos. The reasons given in the "textkritisches Nachwort" for the shifting of cantos are purely subjective.<sup>6</sup> Reisiger ignores completely F. B. Wahr's efforts to show that the *ALH* version does, after all, possess a certain structural design and a "concealed sense of form."<sup>7</sup> When Reisiger does speak about the artistic qualities of the poem, however, he luxuriates in such meaningless epithets as "sehr schön," "lieblich," "herrlich," and even "geisterhaft herrlich" (whatever that may mean).

There are other questions which the edition poses, but does not answer. For example, one would expect a "textkritisches Nachwort" to point out the relationship between the TS and the *ALH* versions. Reisiger mentions only those cantos that were left out in the *ALH*. But what was the original sequence of those cantos in the TS which Hauptmann did use for the *ALH*? In a few cases Reisiger's explanations enable us to follow specific shifts. But then naturally the question arises as to the original place of the other cantos.

Reisiger also fails to record textual variants between the *ALH* and the TS. Certainly, any exact comparison of the texts would detect them. Then, however, it is never clear whether some of the differences are due to earlier Hauptmann versions or simply misprints; e.g.: "wo Irrtum herrscht und nur die Täuschung wahr" (*ALH*, p. 316) against "... und nur die Täuschung war" in the TS (Reisiger, p. 107). Reisiger's text mentions (p. 193) that Damien attempted to kill "Louis Quinze"; in the *ALH* (p. 392) it is "Louis Seize." On the other hand, obvious misprints are not corrected by Reisiger; e.g., p. 180, "hingestellt," whereas the rhyme pattern re-

<sup>5</sup> Reisiger's edition, p. 165.

<sup>6</sup> "Ich glaube," pp. 260, 262; "meine ich," pp. 259, 260; "kann und muss angefügt werden," p. 260.

<sup>7</sup> See note 1.

quires "hingestellt"—a correction which Hauptmann made for the *ALH* (p. 387).<sup>8</sup>

There are other inaccuracies. We are informed that Canto V contains "gut zwei Dutzend" *terza rimas* from Canto 13 of the TS. Which are they exactly? *Terza rimas* 14 and 15 of Canto 14 of the TS, which the author left out of the *ALH* according to Reisiger (p. 259), are not printed anywhere in the new edition. Why? Hauptmann did not leave out sixteen Rathenau *terza rimas* in Canto XX as Reisiger says (p. 260), but only thirteen. TS 29 is *ALH* XXI, not XXII (Reisiger, p. 261). Reisiger inserts three new cantos, not four as he asserts he does (p. 261).

These remarks show that the new edition is an arbitrary, inaccurate, and incomplete combination of the two versions of *Der Grosse Traum* which Hauptmann authorized. It does not even give a full account of the connection between the TS and the *ALH*. It is not, as it pretends to be, "die endgültige . . . Ausgabe des Gesamtwerkes" (dust jacket). So we still have to wait for a definitive, reliable, and complete edition of this epic which Hauptmann ranked highest of all his works. It is to be hoped that a future editor will combine respect for the intentions of the poet with philological accuracy and a more profound understanding of Gerhart Hauptmann.

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<sup>8</sup> For a similar case see *ALH*, p. 397; Reisiger, p. 207.

DIE LEIDEN DES JUNGEN WERTHERS  
A RECONSIDERATION

By HANS REISS

To write about *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* is probably suicidal, but this is at least in keeping with the mood of the novel. There is also no need to recall the warning extended by Percy Lubbock in his *Craft of Fiction*, when he reminds us how a novel vanishes before our eyes and sighs regretfully that it cannot be weighed like a statue or measured like a picture.<sup>1</sup> Impressions of this novel may vary, but if we detach ourselves from it and look at it with a view to perceiving its structure and style, we should be struck by two features which, however obvious, are of great significance: first, that it is divided into two books; and second, that, although it is in its major part a novel in letters, it is also a novel edited by an editor whose preface and final account begins and ends it.

The latter fact is ultimately the more important, for it divides the book into two styles corresponding to two ways of looking at the world. It is as if Goethe speaks with two voices. Just what kinds of voices they are and what they say should emerge from further discussion. Both speak about Werther the man: the one, Werther's own, speaks directly; the other, the editor's, speaks indirectly.

The division into two books, however, is not without significance. The first book spans the period from May to September, 1771, from the time of Werther's arrival in Wahlheim to his departure from this small town. It leads him from the unsettled mood of his first days in Wahlheim to the beginning and growth of his passion for Lotte, until he finally seeks to free himself by departure. The second book reveals a cycle which spans the months of his self-chosen exile from Lotte, when he seeks to live the life of an ordinary man, and ends with his final self-abandonment. This division into two books clearly reveals two cycles: one ending in an escape to freedom, the other in failure and death, even if, in a misguided way, Werther believes it to be an escape into freedom.

We are, however, actually confronted with the passage of two years, 1771 and 1772, which do not entirely coincide with the two books. If, however, we measure time, not quantitatively but emotionally, not by the clock but by intensity or duration (to use Bergson's term), then we are confronted with two emotional parts of equal value, only briefly interrupted by an interlude external to these two parts. Each corresponds to the season which it mainly describes, the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Percy Lubbock, *Craft of Fiction* (London, 1921), p. 274.

first to that of spring and summer, the second to that of autumn and winter.<sup>2</sup> The first part represents the growth and bloom of Werther's passion; the second, the shedding of the leaves, the final isolation, the death of man and nature. It is true that in between lies a whole year, but the reader does not pay much attention to it in terms of the emotional course of the story, even if there are not a few events which take place during that year which runs from September 10, 1771, to September 4, 1772.

The period which Werther spends away from Wahlheim is, of course, not without significance. Indeed, his failure to gain composure during that time helps us to understand both his return to Wahlheim and his later suicide. But in the second book emphasis is laid on the months of Werther's accelerated decline after his return from Wahlheim. The first book closes with a letter of September 10, 1771, toward the end of summer. We do not really become conscious again of the seasons until September 4, 1772, when, in a passage of the second version, Werther explicitly refers to the season: "Ja, es ist so. Wie die Natur sich zum Herbste neigt, wird es Herbst in mir und um mich her. Meine Blätter werden gelb, und schon sind die Blätter der benachbarten Bäume abgefallen" (XIX, 115).<sup>3</sup> Almost an entire year is passed over lightly; the hero's emotional life is in the doldrums. It would be possible to read the novel as if the first book took place in spring and summer and the second in autumn and winter of one emotional year, by which the seasons are given corresponding weight in Werther's emotional life. Whether Werther writes letters only at the height of his emotions, or whether he selects those alone which refer to his emotions, is irrelevant; what matters is that attention is focused upon the course of his emotional life.

Besides its structure, the form of the novel is perhaps most strongly conditioned by the particular genre, the *Briefroman*, to which it belongs. By making use of this sub-genre, in fashion at the time, Goethe was able to present Werther's emotional life with the greatest possible immediacy by giving the letters the form of diary-entries. Yet it is a *Briefroman* with a difference, for it ignores the *Herausgeber*, the editor of Werther's letter, who plays a most important part in the novel.

The initial impression made by the novel is for many readers the liveliness which Werther's letters possess. This is particularly marked if this novel is contrasted with other German eighteenth-century novels, even with those written by that master of the art of narrative, Wieland. The vivacity of language, the spontaneity of expression, and the vividness of description, all allow the reader to partake of Werther's inner experience. The language of the editor, however, has another function. It allows him to retain his own detachment.

<sup>2</sup> I owe this suggestion to an as yet unpublished paper by E. M. Butler, "Goethe's *Werther* and Kafka's *Der Prozeß*."

<sup>3</sup> All quotations are from Part I of the Weimar Ausgabe of Goethe's works.



If we turn to a more detailed stylistic consideration of these two languages, we will find that the editor's language is perhaps best characterized by the words which he applies to the story of Werther: "Sie ist einfach. . . . Was bleibt uns übrig, als dasjenige, was wir mit wiederholter Mühe erfahren können, gewissenhaft zu erzählen" (XIX, 141). The editor's use of words is economical. He concentrates on that which is essential to Werther's story, and we are led to believe that he gives us only those documents which enhance that story. There is no excess of emotion in his writing, even when he describes the climax of the scene between Werther and Lotte. He writes quite simply:

Sie fühlten ihr eigenes Elend in dem Schicksale der Edlen, fühlten es zusammen, und ihre Tränen vereinigten sich. Die Lippen und Augen Werthers glühten an Lottens Arme; ein Schauer überfiel sie; sie wollte sich entfernen, und Schmerz und Anteil lagen betäubend wie Blei auf ihr. Sie atmete sich zu erholen, und bat ihn schluchzend fortzufahren, bat mit der ganzen Stimme des Himmels! Werther zitterte, sein Herz wollte bersten, er hob das Blatt auf und las halb gebrochen. (XIX, 175)

His language is carefully balanced. Only occasionally does repetition give one a sense of the underlying passion which, however, is the more effective since it explodes within the framework of so sober a prose. The repetition of the verbs "fühlten" and "bat" considerably intensifies the impression of feeling that is conveyed. The rise and fall of this paragraph, though expressed in simple language, is very effective. The separate feelings of Werther rise to a crescendo as individual misery is joined with mutual wretchedness. The fusion is indicated by the repetition of "fühlten," and the contrast between the feelings of the two characters then intervenes. Whereas Werther's passion grows more and more violent, Lotte is stupefied. The sentence indicating her stupefaction ends heavily in a clause in which long vowels predominate and which must therefore be read slowly: "und Schmerz und Anteil lagen betäubend wie Blei auf ihr." But the short clauses, interrupted with commas, together with the repetition of "bat," reveal a new quickening of Lotte's mood.

This all too brief analysis of a central passage shows that the language of the editor is not undifferentiated; although matter-of-fact, it is not monotonous. There are few lengthy or awkward sentences. Werther's inner struggles are sometimes indicated by a series of interrogatory sentences, making for variety. His suicide is described briefly, and only what is absolutely necessary is told. Short sentences intimate tremendous upheavals of the inner life. What could be more expressive than the sentences which follow the account of Werther's death:

Um Zwölfe Mittags starb er. Die Gegenwart des Amtmannes und seine Anstalten tuschten einen Auflauf. Nachts gegen Eilfe liess er ihn an die Stätte begraben, die er sich erwählt hatte. Der Alte folgte der Leiche und die Söhne, Albert vermocht's nicht. Man fürchtete für Lottens Leben. Handwerker trugen ihn. Kein Geistlicher hat ihn begleitet. (XIX, 191)

The passage recalls the tone of an official report—indeed, we know that much was taken almost verbatim from Kestner's letters—and yet it loses nothing in vigor.

Brevity here conveys the impression of immediate participation in the events. The ability to convey immediacy of experience is also the foremost effect of Werther's own style. He writes in two types of style: quasi-lyrical and epical. The opening sentence in Werther's first letter of May 4, 1771, a sentence ending with an exclamation mark, is characteristic of the former in that it sets the tone for many such sentences: "Wie froh bin ich, dass ich weg bin!" (XIX, 5). It concludes on an explosive utterance of diction, as do many sentences in Werther's letters in which his pent-up feelings break forth and are transmitted into language. The exclamatory sentences are only part of this explosive style. After the first exclamatory sentences follow short sentences which interrupt this flow and reflect an intrusion of the intellect. These in turn are followed by interrogatory sentences which express rhetorical questions revealing Werther's inner struggles.

By using these three kinds of sentences, a compound is created which brings Werther's increasing unrest into the open. This is at times effected by repetition either of individual words or of individual sentences. Werther writes, "Und doch war ich unschuldig," so that he may write shortly afterwards, "Und doch—bin ich ganz unschuldig?" Other repetitions, for example, words like "Hab' ich nicht" or the fourfold repetition of "Ich will," point to desperate attempts to assert his own ego and give the impression that he wants, at any cost, to overcome his inner doubts about himself. This manner of writing is repeated again and again. There are more and more sentences, especially toward the end of the novel, which are interrupted by these exclamations but are then not completed; they also refute Werther's own contention that he does not love the *Gedankenstrich*. These sentences, too, pronounce an inner passionate movement. The sentence structure is broken into the staccato of short, well-defined parts. They give the impression of changing from one type of sentence to another, as if they reflect the upsurge of a highly strung mind. Their very abruptness indicates that Werther's speech is determined by emotions, not by deliberate thought; that it is spontaneous, not reflective; that it bursts into immediate speech without careful consideration; that it is, in fact, a violent outburst of inner experience which enters the external world like the eruption of lava from a volcano. Only after they have burst forth are these emotional flurries investigated by reason, as the repetition of interrogatory sentences indicates.

One frequent type of repetition—the assertive—shows a retention of the same emotional note which is almost fixed on the same pitch. Feeling can hardly be liberated here; there must be several outbursts before a sense of relief can be produced. Werther cannot obtain relief

from his emotional obsessions until he has uttered quite a few words, if not sentences. His language then liberates him for a while, but for a while only, and it does not do so immediately, but only after several attempts. In such moments of tension there are for him no well-rounded sentences, expressing a balanced mind; rather, language for him has a therapeutic function.

Closely related to this, even if much more strongly differentiated, is another form of sentence structure which reveals yet another side of the character and outlook of Werther. The letter of May 13 provides the first example, although hints may be found earlier. There are sentences which balance one another like two equally weighted scales. At first their antithesis reveals the contrast between the outer and the inner world which, in the end, imposes too great a strain on Werther. For Werther opposes to the demands and happenings of the external world the conditions of his own inner being. When Wilhelm reminds him of the claims which the external world inevitably makes upon him, he protests vehemently. Yet Werther gives in to the urge of his heart at the expense of his will. He offers his own solution to his own needs. He finally wants to protect himself from his dependence on the outer world by excluding himself from it. A precarious balance has been created, a balance which does not last.

It is not at all surprising that the last letters of the year of Werther's death do not show this kind of presentation. There are a few balanced sentences even in the letter of December 21. But the one sentence which appears to have a similar structure is nonetheless of a different kind. This sentence, "Tausend Anschläge, tausend Ansichten wüteten durch meine Seele, zuletzt stand er da, fest, ganz, der einzige Gedanke: ich will sterben!" (XIX, 160), is found in the midst of a great many explosive sentences—and it ends on an exclamation. Apart from this one sentence, Werther does not refer to a contrast between the inner and the outer world, for everything is focused on the inner world.

This form of presentation demands a completely different type of language. There are the longer periods which begin with subsidiary clauses, especially clauses starting with "Wenn." In the letter of May 10 we find perhaps the nearest examples of this type of sentence. The subsidiary clauses completely overshadow the main clause; in Emil Staiger's words,<sup>4</sup> they humiliate it. A powerful urge drives the speaking voice further, moving on at an accelerating speed which ends in a final explosion expressed by the outcry, "Ach, könntest Du das wieder ausdrücken, könntest du dem Papier das einhauchen."

This outcry, however, is only an interlude; there is a new intensification which, on a sharply rising note, leads to a new outcry, "Mein Freund." Suddenly another note is struck, starting with the word "Aber" as if exhaustion makes further speech impossible. The sentence then falls suddenly as if from a great height; after a weary

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Emil Staiger, "Ein Satz aus Goethes Winkelmannsschrift," *Schweizer Monatshefte*, XXXVIII (1957), 203.

sigh, "ich gehe darüber zugrunde," it ends in a final tired reflection, "Ich erliege unter der Gewalt der Herrlichkeit dieser Erscheinungen" (XIX, 8). Gerhard Storz, to whose fine analysis I am indebted,<sup>5</sup> points out that this remarkable sentence is a real diagram of passion. Werther's yearning, the urge of his feeling, his demand of nature, his passion to grasp the absolute in this finite world, gain strength as his feelings burst forth.

Werther's feeling is passionate. It springs from the dark recesses of his subconscious. His ego cannot resist it, for even when he makes an attempt to do so in a main clause, his attempt is driven away by another elementary outburst in subsequent subsidiary sentences. In the end, Werther is forced to succumb to this power; he becomes a prisoner of his inner life, just as the length and power of the subsidiary clauses reveal it, just as the main clauses are exposed to the pressure of subsidiary clauses, indeed, are subordinated to them. His intellect is at the mercy of his feelings, and it does not provide a counterweight to them.

The other type of style is epical. If these emotional sentences represent the lyrical part of the novel, showing its closeness to the lyric poetry of Goethe's *Sturm und Drang* period, the epical parts strike a different note. They show that, however much Werther is committed to the life of feeling, there are times when he has not surrendered to it and is capable of some detachment. Indeed, if that were not so, he would not have been received into society; rather, he would have been ostracized as an impossible eccentric.

The language is not so excited. There are few lengthy subsidiary clauses which would make the main clauses appear unimportant. It is true that there is a preponderance of principal clauses, but the language never becomes awkward or heavy. Short sentences, interruptions, sentences without predicates, and insertions of dialogue endow the language with a liveliness of its own. Again, this liveliness results from an inner participation in the events, and the language reveals this. One example is in the letter of July 1, 1771. After a few short sentences, Werther describes Lotte's effect on others: "Als wir [i.e., Werther and Lotte] in dem mit zwei hohen Nussbäumen überschatteten Pfarrhof traten, sass der gute alte Mann auf einer Bank vor der Haustür, und da er Lotte sah, ward er wie neu belebt, vergass seinen Knotenstock und wagte sich auf, ihr entgegen." We see how Lotte and Werther enter the parsonage, how they find the parson, and how the latter is moved by Lotte's arrival to venture forth to meet her without his stick. But the effect is created by a juxtaposition of three verbs of equal stature, preceded by a subsidiary clause. The effect here created by a short subsidiary clause is much more powerful than the content itself would justify.

Even in the next sentence, "Sie lief hin zu ihm, nötigte ihn sich zu niederzulassen, indem sie sich zu ihm setzte, brachte viele Grüsse

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Gerhard Storz, *Goethe Vigilien* (Stuttgart, 1953), p. 32.

von ihren Buben, das Quakelchen seines Alters" (XIX, 42), a group of principal clauses, interrupted only by one short functional subsidiary, describe Lotte's behavior objectively. But the next sentence, with its accumulation of subsidiary clauses, introduced by "Wie" preceded by a main clause possessing an exclamatory quality, creates a different effect, for it allows us to see Werther's own emotion at this scene.

Du hättest sie sehen sollen, wie sie den Alten beschäftigte, wie sie ihre Stimme erhob, um seinen halb tauben Ohren vernehmlich zu werden, wie sie ihm vor jungen, robusten Leuten erzählte, die unvermutet gestorben wären, von der Vortrefflichkeit des Karlsbades, und wie sie seinen Entschluss lobte, künftigen Sommer hinzugehen, wie sie fand, dass er viel besser aussähe, viel munterer sei als das letztemal, da sie ihn gesehn. (XIX, 42)

Here the language reflects an attempt to be objective, but Werther is incapable of continuing in this mood. His epic descriptions do not last; his passion breaks through; he is moved, and the language again betrays the rise of passion; sentences occur where subsidiary clauses are accumulated. For example, in the letter of June 16 Werther writes,

Wie ich mich unter dem Gespräche in den schwarzen Augen weidete—wie die lebendigen Lippen und die frischen, muntern Wangen meine ganze Seele anzogen—wie ich, in den herrlichen Sinn ihrer Rede ganz versunken, oft gar die Worte nicht hörte, mit denen sie sich ausdrückte—davon hast du eine Vorstellung, weil Du mich nicht kennst. (XIX, 30)

This epic, or semi-epic, style does not occur toward the end of the second book, for Werther's disturbance of mind is too great to allow him to use a more leisurely style of writing in which the objective elements predominate or at least play a great part.

Stylistic analysis has allowed us to catch a glimpse of how emphasis on the emotional life is used to characterize the language of Werther, reflecting the high emotional temper of the book, and how Werther, in turn, is characterized by his language. It reveals the nature of his sickness unto death, the impending disintegration of his personality; it also reveals, by way of its imagery, the confusion and imprecision of his mind, his lack of inner harmony. Above all, Werther's use of language forcefully illustrates his urge to live unconditionally, his inability to compromise, to accept the world as it is.

There are, however, a few words which indicate more specifically the nature of Werther's sorrows. Max Diez has attempted to show how the texture of *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* is woven by words, metaphors, and images which are all related to sickness.<sup>6</sup> This conclusion is, in fact, incontrovertible, however much one may differ on points of detail; but Diez at times presses his argument too far. To single out a key word from among several others is not to say that it is the key to the novel—far from it. But this one word—*Einschrän-*

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Max Diez, "The Principle of Dominant Metaphor in Goethe's *Werther*," *PMLA*, LI (1936).

—allows us to probe more deeply into Werther's character and thus becomes an important word for an understanding of the novel. Erich Trunz has already emphasized its significance in his invaluable commentary.<sup>7</sup> A closer contextual study of the function of this word allows us to analyze Werther's mind and situation more closely. This word is ingrained, as it were, in the very kernel of his sickness unto death.

Werther's life is determined by the polarity between man's limitation and his urge for freedom. He sees himself as a wanderer on the face of the earth, realizing limitless striving; and he is horrified by the confinement of human life. He reflects about it and is torn by opposing urges. He finds *Einschränkung* desirable and idyllic; or he finds it monotonous and intolerable and does not want to accept the limitations imposed by the senses. Yet at the same time he delights in the experiences of his senses so unconditionally that he becomes even more limited than is necessary or wise. His incapacity to make a whole out of these polar contrasts is at the root of his misfortune. His vacillating attitude toward his problems is reflected in the various shades of meaning which the word *Einschränkung* possesses.

In the letter of June 21, 1771, this is perhaps most clearly expressed:

Lieber Wilhelm, ich habe allerlei nachgedacht, über die Begier im Menschen, sich auszubreiten, neue Entdeckungen zu machen, herumzuschweifen; und dann wieder über den inneren Trieb, sich der Einschränkung willig zu ergeben, in dem Gleise der Gewohnheit so hinzufahren und sich weder um Rechts noch um Links zu bekümmern. (XIX, 38)

Here the world appears to Werther so uniform that he despairs of the limitations set for man's activity. But, in the next letter, he takes a different view which, if not completely contradictory, is at least opposed to the previous one. He now welcomes the restriction of existence, and he uses the symbol of the hut which, for Goethe, characterized restriction in domesticity and the narrow sphere.<sup>8</sup>

Yet we see in the same letter how very much mistaken he is and how far his conduct is removed from activity in a quiet sphere. His attitude toward nature brings this out. He rejects all rules governing nature, but he forgets that nature possesses its own regularity of which rules are only a reflection. He believes the same of social life, of the life with others. He wants to follow nature and to follow love; however, he follows neither nature nor love, but a powerful subjective deviation of both, a passion which violates the conditions of social life, of human life itself. When he describes the love of the philistine, he produces a caricature which conceals his unconditional pathological passion. And the image of the river (*Strom*) which he uses at the end of this letter expresses a primeval force which he fails to understand. Certainly a river can flow over its banks and destroy beds and gar-

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Erich Trunz, *Goethe Werke*, VI (Hamburg, 1951), 564.

<sup>8</sup> L. A. Willoughby, "The Image of the 'Wanderer' and the Hut in Goethe's Poetry," *Etudes Germaniques*, VI (1951), 3-4.



deris, but in the normal course of nature it merely flows along within its banks, changing its bed only by gradual erosion and rarely in a sudden catastrophic manner. Furthermore, the flower beds on its banks are not normally destroyed, as Werther thinks, but fertilized.

Werther's desire to see human conduct always in absolute terms is thus not even heeded by him. Here he pleads for unconditional exclusive love, but in a later letter (August 1) he retorts to Wilhelm's remonstrances by asserting that we must not live in terms of either/or, though in the same letter he quickly produces arguments for the opposite view. As these images show, Werther is not consistent. Many examples can be adduced to prove this. On the one hand, he finds delight in the restricted life of others; on the other, he claims it is passion which delights him.

In his discussions with Albert, as reported in the letter of August 12, 1771, Werther expresses the belief that man's confinement is of such a nature that impressions and ideas are capable of turning into passions which finally destroy man. Albert, taking a different view, uses the same word *Einschränkung*, but for him it is something else. The *Einschränkung* in which Werther finds himself is not unavoidable; furthermore, it is capable of being altered by education and effort. He differs from Werther primarily in his refusal to view life in absolute terms. This does not mean that his approval is unprincipled, but rather that he is prepared to adapt himself to life. In his view, Werther has great capacities for fruitful activity. He thinks that Werther should not limit himself too severely by his preoccupation with himself and with abstruse problems. Albert's concern is to follow the guide of the traditions and customs of social life rather than to measure all actions by the criterion of the absolute right of human feeling. Wilhelm's inner life remains concealed to him. It is left to Lotte, who certainly cannot be charged with lack of sympathy for Werther or of intuitive knowledge of his needs, to recognize the essence of his peculiar predicament. For she sees that Werther is a victim of a self-contradictory mode of life, a victim of the polar tensions within himself which he cannot resolve. His urge to attain the absolute and his desire to limit himself do not lead him to freedom, but to unnecessary, unwholesome restriction. He is *eingeschränkt*, and this excludes him from the life of others. Lotte sees clearly that the *Einschränkung* is, in fact, Wilhelm's real condition of which he is unaware.

This word *Einschränkung* and the emotions associated with it reveal the conflicting contradictory forces within Werther. The development of the story shows a continuation of his inner contradictions, finally ending in death, which for Werther is implicit in the notion of *Einschränkung*.

At the beginning of his medical history, as far as the records show, Werther ponders on the subject of death, which for him at that time is an abstract possibility, and he speaks of the sense of freedom given



by the knowledge that one can leave the prison of life. He sees death as a part of a gradual natural process; he speaks of two beings who live in their confinement and who see the leaves fall and yet do not think of the coming of winter. But his passion for Lotte grows, and he becomes more and more absorbed in its ecstasy. In the great dialogue with Albert he becomes excited when Albert contradicts him, and his language betrays how he views man's limitations: he compares man to a nation struggling in the chains of a tyrant. Here again we are able to gauge the contradictory quality of his mode of expression. At the beginning he speaks of breaking the chains, and at the end he evokes the images of the inevitability of the labyrinth. This paradox indicates that Werther's use of language is deceptive, and that his utterances should not be accepted unconditionally. He protests too much. Despite all his contentions that freedom can be reached only through suicide, there is an unconscious recognition that from the standpoint of nature it is not a step into freedom, but an aberration of disease.

In the later stages of his life this connection between *Einschränkung* and death is more strongly indicated. The liberation which Werther wants to achieve is, in fact, condemned by the image or the words which represent a symbol of two polar opposites in the human personality. The image is again varied by another image at a later stage when he protests against the imprisonment life imposes upon him. When the word *eingeschränkt* appears in his last letter to Lotte, we can see how far he has traveled from the conventional view. He blames mankind for being human and believes that man's existence has no real meaning.

Thus this word and other words closely allied to it reflect Werther's protest against the limitations of mankind. He protests because he feels that he is better than others; yet he too is bound by the human desire to limit himself. The freedom which he craves is just as much an illusion as is the peace which he sometimes believes that he possesses. In fact, he can neither consistently accept a point of view nor properly adapt himself to the basic conditions of human life.

This word *Einschränkung* and others like it describe a person incapable of coming to terms with—even of recognizing—the contradictory impulses within himself which, in the end, wreak his destruction. Werther sees clearly, but he is lucid only in relation to one strand of his ideas. He sees that strand very clearly indeed, but always his intelligence is at the mercy of his emotions. It is entirely motivated by them. So too is his will swayed by them. He is blind to all other facets of life. If his emotions dictate the course of his actions and thoughts, he follows their command heedlessly. He is a victim of his own polarity, following each point of view to its so-called logical conclusion, which inevitably becomes absurd. He is destroyed by the irreconcilable conflict within himself which compels him to take up and cling to extreme, untenable positions that are mutually contradictory.

Werther's feelings are an unreliable guide to life, because feelings do not proceed at an even pace. Hence, his emotional tone is uneven; his views about life and mankind spring only from his feelings which are contradictory and in conflict. He cannot turn to the external world for guidance, for to him any consideration of the external world is turned into a reflection on his own emotional response to it, as Hans Jaeger has recently pointed out.<sup>9</sup> Feeling is the touchstone of all thought and activity. He believes that feeling, not artistic achievement, is what makes a man an artist. He rejoices in the twilight of thought or the unreality of the world into which his emotions throw him, provided it allows him to taste of emotional intensity. He is a man who wants always to experience everything absolutely, to retain all emotions in the raw, when they are not spoiled by the interference of the outer world. He is a man who judges the external world by his inner desires alone and who is finally broken by the tensions between the demands of external life and the desires of his inner life.

If Werther can be seen as the prototype of a neurotic personality, then modern psychological findings will have a valid application. Werther is a convincing character, not only because he speaks directly to our feelings, but because he represents a clinical case in the disintegration of a personality, because he is a neurotic, "ein nervöser Charakter," as Ernst Feise has shown him to be.<sup>10</sup> Werther was convincing because he expressed currents of his age; he spoke for and against a generation. Werther as a character convinces many of us today, because we see in him a person whose inner life is objectively and skillfully described and analyzed. Today our criteria are, rightly or wrongly, influenced by the development of modern psychology; we wish not only to feel that a character is convincing, but we desire intellectual conviction based on psychological evidence. Such, then, is the way by which Goethe solves the technical problem of the novel: to make a man's suicide convincing, for after all suicide is not a step normally taken lightly.

Werther's fate is the focus of attention in the novel; but he is seen against the background of his relations with other characters. It is impossible here to evaluate all of these. It must suffice to indicate only two aspects: one in his relation to an apparent foil, the *Bauernbursche*; the other, in his relation to the one person in the novel who is completely outside the story—the editor. These two relationships, perhaps because they are more remote to the issue of the novel than are his relations with Lotte or Albert, bring out more clearly Werther's personality and the whole tendency of the novel.

The story of the peasant lad is generally seen as a parallel to

<sup>9</sup> Hans Jaeger, "Charakterologische Stilanalyse des Werther," an as yet unpublished paper read at the 72nd meeting of the MLA at Madison, Wisconsin, September, 1957.

<sup>10</sup> Ernst Feise, "Werther als nervöser Charakter," *Germanic Review*, I (1926).

Werther's own life, although one scholar, at least, Barker Fairley, dissented from this commonly held view, claiming that its purpose was to provide a contrast.<sup>11</sup> To explore his suggestion a little further is perhaps not inappropriate. As is well known, this episode was introduced only in the second version, when Goethe wanted to accentuate some of the features of Werther's character. The *Bauernbursche* is not a neurotic personality like Werther. He is a person who disintegrates, but, contrary to Werther, he has suffered a disappointment which has some objective cause in the external world. He is not dissatisfied with the condition of man, as is Werther, but with the course of his love affair. After all, his high hopes were foiled after he had to some extent been encouraged, for the widow had allowed him to be on a standing of some familiarity—and then she had married someone else. The peasant lad in his wrath murders his successful rival who is to obtain possession of both the woman and the farm, of love and property.

Werther considers the peasant lad, first, an extreme case of idyllic love and, second, an extreme but analogous case of passion. But there lies his deception, and we must not accept his point of view. This *crime passionnel* has no inner connection with Werther's own case. It is only Werther's egotistical and unrealistic imagination that would make it so. After all, the peasant lad has a realistic aim, however deplorable it may be. He wants to prevent his beloved from marrying someone else. Werther's aim is unrealistic by comparison. By his suicide he is unable to achieve anything. To see himself as a criminal, as someone who might murder Albert or commit adultery, is, in the last resort, a figment of his imagination or a vagary of his mind. He may fear that he is on the verge of criminality, but it would not bring him nearer to Lotte, and it would be too late to prevent the marriage. This episode, therefore, is not a parallel case, but serves, instead, to illuminate Werther's passion by the contrast it provides.

There is another seemingly parallel case which, on closer inspection, turns out not to be parallel at all. It is the story of the mad youth who became insane, as Werther later discovers, because of his unfortunate, hopeless love for Lotte. This story does not prove that Werther, too, is insane or near insanity, but rather shows the full extent of his illusion. It feeds his own mistaken passion. It is he who makes it out to be a parallel case when it is none. Werther is not certifiably insane nor is he ever near it. He retains his lucidity to the end, however neurotic he may be. Thus this episode is but another indication of Werther's mistaken view of reality.

There is still another person, though he cannot be called a character proper, whose relationship to Werther is of vital importance. It is the *Herausgeber*. Stylistic analysis makes it plain that the role he plays is important. As has been shown above, he is primarily a mat-

<sup>11</sup> Barker Fairley, *Goethe as Revealed in His Poetry* (London, 1932), p. 47.

ter-of-fact, objective person. It is generally agreed that the role of the editor was designed to introduce distance into the novel.<sup>12</sup> This is undoubtedly true. Apart from merely practical considerations—after all, Werther could hardly have told the story of his suicide and its aftermath—it means that the tragic impact of the tale is softened without weakening the impact of the story as a whole. It even introduces different worlds. For the editor has a different concept of reality than does Werther.

*Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* is a novel which stands squarely in the tradition of the European novel. This tradition has, since the day of Cervantes, as Lionel Trilling pertinently suggested,<sup>13</sup> been concerned with determining the relationship between appearance and reality. Werther's own view of what constitutes reality is corrected by the editor's view. But it is a mistake to identify the views of the editor with those of Goethe. That would be but another form of a basic fallacy of literary interpretation, the fallacy of mistaking the views of a character for those of an author. The role of the editor indicates that Goethe was struggling to attain a satisfying view of reality, and that the questions posed by Werther were agitating his own mind, even though Werther's conclusions were not necessarily his own.

Werther believes that reality is determined by one's emotions. Only that which is felt can be real. Other interpretations of the world, such as those of Albert and Herr Schmidt or even of Wilhelm, are for him misleading and, therefore, to be dismissed with contempt. But Werther's view of life, as the novel indicates, is inadequate. It is not enough to see the world in such a way that one's image of it is determined by man's feeling and yearning. This leads to a subjective, one-sided view of life which is unsatisfactory and eventually spells calamity. Through the insertion of the editor Goethe is able to show that he does not necessarily share the view of his character, but that a different picture of reality can be constructed.<sup>14</sup>

Since the narration of the editor is so matter-of-fact and so apparently lacking in feeling, we are at first inclined to assume that what takes place is merely a report and in no way amounts to an image of reality. But precisely in this objectivity lies the image of the world which he presents. The editor's description of the sorrows of Werther, as his language reveals, offers a view of reality in which feeling is subordinated to reason. He proves, and even more surely indicates

<sup>12</sup> Hans-Egon Hass, in "Werther-Studie," *Gestaltprobleme der Dichtung*, ed. Richard Alewyn, Hans-Egon Hass, Clemens Heselerhaus (Bonn, 1956), is emphatic in his statement that the function of the editor is not only a technical device making the letters appear as real letters and creating detachment, but that it also makes it possible for Werther's inner life to be more fully revealed.

<sup>13</sup> Lionel Trilling, *The Liberal Imagination* (London, 1951), p. 207.

<sup>14</sup> Erich Trunz, in "Literaturwissenschaft als Auslegung und als Geschichte der Dichtung," *Festschrift für Jost Trier*, ed. Benno von Wiese, Karl Heinz Bosch (Meisenheim-Glan, 1954), takes a similar view; for him, this voice of the normal man restores equilibrium and unity to the world.

by his style, that life need not necessarily always be reviewed at a high pitch, but can also be seen calmly. It would, however, be wrong to see in the editor's report a criticism of Werther. A different view of reality is presented, which may only implicitly be critical of Werther. Account has to be taken of both views of reality if a proper image is to be gained.

We are nearly at the end of our inquiry. The way to a discussion of the themes developed in the novel, of Goethe's attitude toward important aspects of a man's life, to the conflicts between emotion and intellect, spontaneity and custom, health and disease, to the problems of religion and nature, death and disease, could now be charted, I trust, with somewhat more assurance. We can also perhaps probe more deeply into the relations between Goethe and his own novel, his creative self-identification and his later refusal to read it. The insertion of the editor tells us that Goethe was capable of detachment, and the careful construction of the novel shows that Goethe was capable of objectivity. But the spontaneous power of Werther's passionate letters also tells us that Werther's experience forms a part, but only a part, of his own imaginative experience.

One further inference should perhaps be drawn. *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* is in some ways a revolutionary novel, not only with regard to form and language, but also because Werther presents a secularized, egocentric, anthropomorphic vision of the world, a vision in which both the secular ideas of the *Aufklärung* and the religious heritage of pietism are blended. But we must not accept Werther's evaluation of these ideas. Neither his vacillating views of religion or nature, nor his refusal to accept the mediation of Christ, nor his endowing his own love with sacrificial significance for others necessarily represents Goethe's own views. Neither must we see in it merely the record of an inevitable psychological disintegration, for it is inevitable only because Werther wishes it to be so—it is not suggested that another development might have been possible. Nor must we see *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* as a novel of protest against social conditions.

The novel is, of course, a novel of protest, but that is only one of its several aspects. It is the novel of Werther's protest against a world in which one man's aspirations are limited. But that is Werther's own protest, not the novel's. For the novel is also a polemic against an excessive emotionalism, carried on at a high pitch by the very emotionality of its hero. It is an attack upon a one-sided view of life. Even at an early stage in his writing Goethe attacked a one-sided view of life, just as he later (in his *Farbenlehre*) attacked what he thought to be intellectual one-sidedness.<sup>15</sup> Let us remember that in this novel Goethe speaks with two voices; there is no unity of style as we find it later in *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*. This reveals Goethe's own conflict. Two conflicting views of the world are op-

<sup>15</sup> I owe this suggestion to Elisabeth M. Wilkinson.

posed to one another, and neither is shown to be comprehensive. Whereas Werther the man protests against the ordinary, commonplace view of life, and our sympathies are with him, Albert protests against an excessive, absurd espousal of an extremist view, and we must consider his point of view with favor. Lotte regrettably protests against the limited, narrow vision to which an extremist perspective can confine a man, and who would wish to disagree with the pleading of this charming woman? But Werther embodies, as a person, an unconditional, hence misleading and ultimately tragic, view of the world. The editor presents the world as it is; he offers a realistic assessment, but an assessment which, as his language betrays, is not the whole story either, for not everything can be encompassed here.

There are, indeed, as stylistic analysis shows, two voices which alternate in the novel,<sup>16</sup> basically at war with one another, each claiming to represent the only world. However much Goethe had mastered the form of the novel, however compact his structural arrangements, however subtle his technique, here he has presented a world in conflict. We may perceive the fruitful mastering of tension in other works, but not in *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*. We may believe with the editor that Werther's example will console like-minded readers, but the fact remains that Goethe, as Emil Staiger has argued,<sup>17</sup> was still searching for a style, since he was not satisfied with any of the styles of writing he had thus far developed. He was still in the midst of the emotional whirlpool of his youth.

The tension underlying the novel is such that a unified speech was unable to do justice to it. This was achieved only in the later novels. Thus *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* presents a seeming paradox: a unified, coherent work of art in which unity and coherence coexist despite the opposition of two styles of writing, of two modes of thought. In this way, however, a much more subtle assessment of reality is conveyed than is often supposed. Even this novel of his *Sturm und Drang* years anticipates this masterful objectivity which characterizes the work of his classical period. But here he does not resolve this basic conflict which still forms a major problem of our civilization, the conflict between spontaneity and reflection, between the demands of the emotions and of traditional behavior. He merely shows it in the raw.

There is no other novel of Goethe's which possesses this conflict of language, which becomes, for Goethe, a conflict between two worlds. The only major work in which Goethe speaks with many tongues is

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Hermann Böschstein, in *Deutsche Gefühlskultur* (Berne, 1954), who makes a similar, though in some ways different, point. Böschstein writes: "es ist, als ob zwei Federn am Werk gewesen wären, eine vom Herzen, eine vom Verstand gehalten. Der Briefstil, mit nur einem Briefschreiber, war allerdings angetan, die Vielstimmigkeit zu verdecken. Sie erklingt aber in den Briefen, keineswegs etwa bloss in den eines Anmerkungen paar fingierten Herausgebers" (I, 284).

<sup>17</sup> Emil Staiger, *Goethe, I* (Zurich, 1950), *passim*.

*Faust*. Goethe there portrayed a many-sided world which was manifested through many modes of speech. And in *Urfaust*, the other (albeit incomplete) masterpiece of his *Sturm und Drang* period, Goethe gave expression to the conflict within him by depicting outward conflict through different forms of speech. In his first novel, however, Goethe succeeded in marshaling conflicting elements into an artistic whole; therefore, this work, I contend, is still worthy to be ranked among the great novels of world literature.

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## REVIEWS

*A Tale of Wonder: A Source Study of "The Wife of Bath's Tale."* By SIGMUND EISNER. Wexford, Ireland: John English & Co., 1957. Pp. 148.

"Why was it all necessary?" asks Sigmund Eisner, disarmingly, of his re-study of the sources of *The Wife of Bath's Tale* (p. 141). He was not impelled to write a contribution to literary criticism of the tale, which seems to him, in modesty, "superfluous . . . to repeat and an impossibility to improve on." Rather, he was drawn to his study by the need "to trace more fully than has yet been done the history of a story" (p. 142).

Some confusion of purpose is suggested in the concluding disclaimer and explanation. If, as purported by the subtitle, the book is a source study, the "necessity" for it must be the light it casts on the poem, the sources of which it studies. Even though a "scholar" may renounce the wholeness of literary study and leave matters of interpretation to the "critic," he must recognize that his work is an ancillary to an understanding of the poem. If the subtitle is a misnomer, and Eisner's study consists purely in a comparative history of the tale as a legendary-literary type, the disclaimer is not needed, but rather a rewriting of the subtitle.

In fact, Eisner's book is concerned both with the comparative study of "a tale of wonder" and with a source study of *The Wife of Bath's Tale*, and this division of purpose has made for weakness. As a comparative study in historical development, the book is unoriginal and too narrowly conceived to be effective; as a source study, the book is discursive. It is, however, as a source study that the book has its chief importance.

Eisner adopts the traditional view that the loathly lady is of Irish origin. He argues ingeniously for Welsh-Breton transmission to France. Unfortunately, the argument rests on inconclusive evidence from analogous tales (p. 137). Eisner has a plausible conjecture to offer as a solution to the problem that the sovereignty represented by the Irish loathly lady is political, whereas the sovereignty of the English lady is domestic. A "clever Breton *conteur*," retelling the story for a French audience and realizing that Irish political allegory "would have been wasted on the new audience," supplied the new domestic context for sovereignty.

Eisner reconstructs the source of the four English versions of the loathly lady tale. One important result of his reconstruction for *The Wife of Bath's Tale* is to make the rape motif not original with Chaucer, but part of the original source. Eisner's dubiously conjectural method in establishing this hypothesis is characteristic of his entire approach. The rape motif is present only in Chaucer's version, but the reconstructed source is Arthurian and the hero, Gawain; Gawain, in the First Continuation of Chrétien's *Conte del Graal*, was pictured as guilty of rape. Through comparison with *The Knight and the Shepherd's Daughter*, Gawain, as rapist, is made an indigenous part of a reconstructed Arthurian source.

Why does Chaucer have an anonymous here, rather than Gawain? and why does Gower omit the rape incident entirely? "Possibly both Chaucer and Gower

were unwilling to associate Gawain with a rape adventure. Chaucer avoided the difficulty by eliminating the name and familiar relationship to Arthur. Gower also eliminated the problem. Florent was thrust into his adventures by a successful combat against the knight Branchus . . ." (p. 69). Why no rape in the other two English versions? "Into the source of the ballad and romance was introduced a new adventure, that of the bold baron" (p. 81). But here Eisner completely overlooks the powerful connection between Gower's non-Arthurian version and the ballad and romance, the motif of the hero falling into the hands of an enemy who seeks to destroy him.

It is interesting that Eisner's summary of the Florent story (p. 62) omits mention of the malignity of the captor. A further suggestion that Eisner has not read his texts with the attention which the difficulty of his subject demands is his reading of lines 1009-12 from *The Wife of Bath's Tale*:

'Plight me thy trouthe heere in myn hand,' quod she,  
'The nexte thyng that I requere of thee,  
Though shalt it do, if it lye in thy myght,  
And I wol telle it yow er it be nyght.'

"He met a hag who promised a satisfactory solution *if the youth would marry her*" (p. 7, and see also p. 46; my italics).

In short, Sigmund Eisner's study of the sources of *The Wife of Bath's Tale*, however interesting, is unreliable. The text seems well edited. It includes a bibliography, but no index.

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*Chapman's Homer*. Edited by ALLARDYCE NICOLL. Vol. I: *The Iliad*. Vol. II: *The Odyssey and the Lesser Homerica*. New York: Pantheon Books, Bollingen Series XLI, 1956. I, xxii + 749; II, xvi + 654. \$10.00 the set.

The ideal edition of this translation, as Allardyce Nicoll rightly suggests in his commentary (I, 661), would take into account the Greek original and Jean de Sponde's Latin version of 1583, which Chapman used, besides considering the several stages of Chapman's own work. Nicoll, whose chief aim was to prepare an accurate text for the general reader and the student of Elizabethan literature, refers to the original and the Latin version only when he thinks it necessary to explain difficult passages. In the main, his elucidations are helpful; but there are one or two points at which he would have benefited by closer attention to the Greek.

In Book IX of the *Iliad* (lines 53 ff. in Chapman), Nestor commends Diomedes for opposing Agamemnon's suggestion that the Greeks go home. In the 1611 text (now printed in the Shakespeare Head edition [Oxford: Blackwell, 1930]), Chapman has Nestor say to Diomedes:

thy words had high degree  
Of wisdom in them to our kings, since well they did become  
Their right in question, and refute inglorious going home.

Although Chapman twice revised his version of Book IX, he did not change "kings" to "king," as is done by Nicoll, and by Richard Hooper, whose edition was the standard one before this appeared. On the surface, "king" suits the context better: Diomedes had spoken directly to Agamemnon, not generally to

the council. But Homer wrote *basileas*, "kings," and Chapman may be supposed to have known this. Nestor's use of the plural is a nice diplomatic touch, characteristic of the old man—and it is even more effectively conveyed in Chapman's 1598 version, from which Nicoll reprints this speech in his textual notes: "yet wiselie-bold thy tongue / Gives counsaill to our Grecian kings." If "kings" was good enough for Chapman, why did Hooper and Nicoll throw it out? Because it looks like a printer's error?

In Book XI of the *Odyssey*, Chapman has a phrase which puzzles Nicoll. Here again the Greek original gives the clue. Telemachus has ordered Eumaeus, the swineherd, to tell Penelope—and no one else—that he has come home to Ithaca. Eumaeus wonders why he may not tell Laertes too: "But, all in one yet, may I not reveale / To th' old hard-fated Arcesiades / Your safe returne?" (lines 184 ff.). On "all in one yet," Nicoll comments: "Apparently meaning 'in spite of what you have said.'" But this explains only "but" and "yet," which need no explanation. Surely "all in one" is Chapman's attempt at an idiomatic equivalent for Eumaeus' words *all' age moi tode eipe kai atrekebs katalexon*, "But tell me this now, and tell me true."

Points such as these do not affect the intelligibility of the text; but occasionally Nicoll's editing obscures that too. He has modernized Chapman's punctuation, but not his spelling, beyond making uniform the spelling of proper names. As a general reader, inexperienced in Elizabethan texts, I find the old punctuation helps me to endure the old spelling; but this is a matter of taste. In the realm of fact, what did Chapman mean by the following (*Iliad* XI. 495 ff.)?

at last, when their Cur-like presumes,  
More urg'd, the more forborne; his spirits, did rarifie their fumes,  
And he revokt his active strength;

Nicoll omits two commas here, and puts commas for the semicolons:

at last, when their Cur-like presumes,  
More urg'd, the more forborne, his spirits did rarifie their fumes  
And he revokt his active strength,

Hooper omits the comma after "presumes." The sense clearly demands the omission. Ajax has refrained from fighting back at the Trojans who are harassing him; but (I paraphrase) "the longer he put up with their cur-like presumptuousness, the more it irritated him." Chapman said all that in eight words, which he added to Homer: "their Cur-like presumes more urg'd, the more forborne." Keats might have noticed this flash of gold, but in Nicoll's printing it is likely to elude anyone who takes his commas seriously.

A comma not left out, a locution unexplained, an unwarranted emendation: these, taken singly, are minor flaws. But when one comes on all of them in an hour or so of browsing, one suspects that the edition as a whole may not be altogether worthy of this monument of poetry and Hellenism. Even the general reader (to say nothing of the English student) deserves the best; and he will not get it until a team of scholars goes through Chapman's work with constant reference to all his sources. Pending that millennium, this edition provides a readable text, an admirable glossary, interesting selections from the versions of 1598, and adequate biographical and bibliographical information. Chapman's own glosses and commentaries are included. They contain much good criticism. Some of it is in Latin and Greek, none of which is translated. I suppose the general reader could figure out *apta ad rem comparatio* (on *Iliad* XII. 167, where the Greeks are aptly compared to angered wasps), or *vinum Maroneum*

memorable (on *Odyssey* IX. 300, where the talk is of Maron's memorable wine); but what will he do with *Scopticè* (on *Iliad* XIII. 724) or *morem senum observat, qui de praeteritis libenter solent meminisse* (on *Iliad* IX. 421)?

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*Jonson and the Comic Truth.* By JOHN J. ENCK. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1957. Pp. viii + 281. \$5.00.

John Enck believes that Jonson's greatness consists, first, in the clear-sighted recognition of what he and comedy could reach. Enck thereupon adopts *Perdix* as an appropriate symbol. He finds the low-flying partridge alluded to in the Ovidian source of Jonson's motto, which accompanies the emblem of the broken compass. Since "comic truth" is more limited and earth-bound than the truth of tragedy, Jonson's own limitations are appropriate to it. The great distinction of Jonson's plays derives from the form in which he embodied "comic truths" (p. 19). "A true appreciation begins with the consent to sustain the multiple details within a pattern" (p. 16). It is this that Enck sets out to do in studying the individual plays. His most interesting conclusions, as he suggests (p. 20), are in the knowledge to be gathered from his descriptions of "design" and "pattern" in the plays themselves.

Although Enck's general view of Jonson's work seems conservative in relation to traditional opinion, the evaluations of individual plays are sometimes challenging. *Every Man Out of His Humour*, not its predecessor, is a "focal point," a "crucial work" in Jonson's career. The earlier play (not called a humor play by Enck) seems only a slight development from *The Case Is Altered*. *Sejanus*, *Volpone*, *The Alchemist*, and *Bartholomew Fair* remain Jonson's major achievements, but Enck finds in *The Alchemist* signs of a decline setting in: the pyrotechnical set pieces, the "catalogical imperative," the "isolated flytings" between characters.

The chapter on *The Alchemist* seeks mainly to uncover the "serious shortcomings" usually overlooked. The subject of alchemy leads Jonson into a "deviation from the comic intent"; although *Subtle* is admittedly a quack, his quackery "must refer to facts" and "involves wide knowledge." *Subtle*, therefore, becomes a kind of *Faustus*, wielding "an absolute dexterity in language permitted no other knave"; and "no one effectively contradicts him" (p. 165). Jonson's uses of the languages of alchemists and Puritans, while admittedly brilliant, seem to Enck a "slandering of texts" that "runs counter to respect for the word" (p. 165), so that "reason itself falls under censure." Enck's awareness that alchemy was "the progenitor of modern science" seems to doom Jonson to failure, since "only in the twentieth century is the time ripe for a comedy of pure science." Some assumptions and inferences here seem untenable.

Although Enck claims that Jonson's language is, above all, the form in which his greatness must be discovered (p. 19), the descriptions of language, acute and perceptive as they are, do not lead to any new perceptions of poetic value. To Enck, the language seems to provide suitable support for Jonson's complex dramatic structures. Thus, although the description of the imagery of *Sejanus* raises questions of great interest, it never illuminates Jonson's success in a particular place. The analysis of language, whether in imagery or of speech patterns, stands beside but does not seem integral to Enck's understanding and appreciation. One who admires Jonson as a great dramatic poet may be disappointed

by the final effect of this book. However, all students of Jonson will be grateful for so careful a study, so filled with concrete observation and thought, and so suggestive of direction for further inquiry.

ALEXANDER SACKTON

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*The Academy, 1869-1879: Victorian Intellectuals in Revolt.* By DIDERIK ROLL-HANSEN. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, Anglistica, Vol. VIII, 1957. Pp. 237. Dan. kr. 27,50; to subscribers, Dan. kr. 20,-.

When Matthew Arnold published in the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1864 an essay on "The Literary Influence of Academies," he and many of his contemporaries may have felt that he was crying out in a wilderness so far as any response from English critics was concerned. However, his words did not fall upon deaf ears entirely, for there was already forming at Oxford an intellectual elite who were deeply concerned about the standards of English literature and scholarship. But when Dr. Charles Edward Appleton, a young Oxford Fellow and Hegelian philosopher, founded a review called *The Academy* in 1869, he was not guided by the Puritan persuasiveness of Arnold but by the models of scholarly accuracy and impartiality of the *Literarisches Centralblatt für Deutschland* and the *Revue Critique d'Histoire et de Littérature*. Although Appleton's journal had the parallel aim of being "a central organ of sound information and correct taste in intellectual matters," the Oxford elite who supported it looked upon the "Prophet of Culture" with some condescension as one whose graceful style only served to hide "the angular and unlovely lineaments of the Puritan metaphysic."

Diderik Roll-Hansen, a Norwegian scholar, has given in short space in this monograph one of the most penetrating and perceptive studies of a Victorian journal that has been produced in English. Viewing it against the background of the periodical history of the era and the intellectual ferment at Oxford that brought it into being, he has clarified the complex intellectual currents of the epoch. The details of the battle of the university liberals for secular studies against the opposition of the orthodox, and of the development of the idea of an intellectual elite, help to illuminate the study of the periodical which for ten years under the editorship of Appleton held to the most uncompromising standards of scholarship. More austere even than the *Athenaeum* in its devotion to an ideal of thoroughness in covering every cultural and intellectual interest of the time, *The Academy* became a phenomenon of scholarly journalism. Such contributors as Mark Pattison, Thomas Henry Huxley, Edward Dowden, George Henry Lewes, and Appleton himself maintained the solid character of the monthly review.

One of the most interesting chapters is that in which Roll-Hansen tells of the war between Appleton and his publisher: "A Hegelian Editor versus John Murray III." Murray did not know what he was in for when he undertook to finance and publish a journal whose editor would make no compromise with popular taste and who insisted upon absolute editorial independence. Murray was inclined to look upon the editor and his distinguished staff as his personal servants, whereas "Appleton would in any case have regarded the head of a prosperous publishing firm as a typical representative of the finite world and a very modest contributor to the upward flight of the human spirit. . . ."

While the author is primarily concerned with the editorship of Appleton, he has also traced the later history of the periodical, when it gradually compro-

mised with the demands of the reading public, first by becoming a weekly journal and then by broadening its scope to compete with such papers as the *Athenaeum*. Under a succession of editors it continued to be a periodical of considerable influence during the remainder of the century, its literary and art departments being supported by notable contributors: Mrs. Mark Pattison, Edmund Gosse, A. W. Benn, and George Saintsbury. It gave a generally favorable view of the Pre-Raphaelites and some attention to the new aestheticism. Lord Alfred Douglas, the cruel friend of Oscar Wilde, was briefly its editor, but it dwindled out and died in 1916.

It was during the ten years of Appleton's regime, however, as Roll-Hansen points out, that *The Academy* achieved its fame by surveying "the European literary and scientific movement as a whole," and by drawing attention to "permanent works of taste and real additions to knowledge."

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*American English*. By ALBERT H. MARCKWARDT. New York: Oxford University Press, 1958. Pp. xi + 194. \$4.50.

Every student of American English looks forward hopefully to the publication of a solid treatise that will encompass the total historical and descriptive aspects of our language. For a long time H. L. Mencken's highly eclectic, but infinitely fascinating work, *The American Language*, has offered a modest consolation in this area. Thomas Pyles's spirited account of *Words and Ways in American English* (rev., *MLQ*, XV [1954], 278-79) provided us more recently with further satisfaction through a clarification of perspective.

In the present work, Albert Marckwardt has attempted to analyze the most salient features of American English, particularly with reference to its cultural background. Apparently because of the limited scope of the work, he has confined the greater part of his discussion to the treatment of vocabulary. The longest chapter (3. "The Melting Pot"), for instance, deals variously with the contributions of non-English elements.

But it should be stated immediately, and with enthusiasm, that the most significant contribution of the book as a whole is its welcome account of the work done by Hans Kurath on the *Linguistic Atlas of the United States* and the important evidence contained in his *Word Geography of the Eastern United States* (rev., *MLQ*, XII [1951], 245-47). In this connection, the reader will be reminded of the shocking lack of information available on American English: in addition to the sparsity of publications on actual Atlas material (not to mention the shortage of research in some areas), there is a great need for intensive regional studies.

Marckwardt has carefully culled the most copious dictionaries at hand (many of which, it must be admitted, are either faulty or decades out of date) and has thus felt confidently in possession of all the facts presently known. He does not make the traditional mistake of assigning the area west of the Mississippi River to a sort of linguistic appendage called "General American," but a more intimate acquaintance with this region might well have saved him from the error of quoting even less informed authorities who insist, for example, that the Chinook word *salal* has long ago passed out of use (p. 27). Indeed, several million people on the West Coast would be amazed at such a statement. It is only too clear,

therefore, that our knowledge of western American English cannot now continue to depend on the journals of Lewis and Clark.

Endowed with the twin virtues of brevity and simplicity, the book suffers only slightly from inaccuracies thus necessarily entailed. The *New England Atlas* is said to contain "some 600 maps" (p. 133) rather than 734; it is made to appear that a "taboo" against such forms as "John and me," with resulting misuse of "John and I," is something new and unique in current American English (p. 184), whereas the same problem is evident in Shakespeare (*M. of V.* III.ii. 321); the word "coulee" is given an inadequate definition by implication (p. 38); "saw buck" is not exclusively of Dutch origin (p. 48), but is at least supported by Pennsylvania German; and the birth date for "pick-up"—1944—will come as a shock to those who were still driving Model T "pick-up" trucks in the 1930's (p. 85). "Chigger," of course, is of African, not Spanish, origin (p. 41).

Further considerations here include the following: the common expression "shanty Irish" might well favor the Irish origin of "shanty" (p. 38); "pinochle" (p. 53) is surely of French origin, as are many other terms associated with card games; and a Pennsylvania German might wish to quarrel with the spelling of "Belschnigel" (pp. 53, 54) for what is regularly pronounced as "Bels-nickel."

To summarize briefly, we can say that the book is stimulating and informative, as well as original, but that it is slightly ethnocentric and leans too heavily on outdated or scanty data. It seems probable, therefore, that the successful production of an authoritative work on American English may best be accomplished by collaboration among many scholars. For until much more information is available, a thorough knowledge of American English can be gleaned only from the reported experience of observers in many regions.

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*Dictionary of French Literature.* Edited by SIDNEY D. BRAUN. New York: Philosophical Library, 1958. Pp. xiii + 362. \$10.00.

It is difficult to imagine, this side of perfection, a finer dictionary of French literature than that which Sidney Braun has here compiled. Ably assisted by a distinguished group of authoritative scholars whose articles, mostly on genres and movements, show a combination of soundness and independence that could scarcely be expected between two covers, he has composed a book which possesses conciseness, completeness, and even style.

Only a few of the strong and weak points can be mentioned here—the *Dictionary* is, after all, this side of perfection. The apportionment of space, on which to be sure no two students would agree, seems puzzling at times; for example, Denis Amiel is given as much space as Marcel Aymé, and Valéry Larbaud gets more than La Rochefoucauld. The apparent decision not to include articles in the bibliographies (though this is not always observed) seems ill-advised, considering that the volume is billed as up-to-date—and truly is. Much of the best scholarship in French literature is contained in articles the gist of which will find its way into more general books only after a period of years.

The choice of bibliographical items, first-rate in the majority of cases, falls short on occasion. Here are several examples. Six books on Jansenism are listed, but only two each on Flaubert and Rabelais, and three each on Balzac and Montaigne. The surprising Calvin bibliography consists of the books by Reyburn



and Méréjkovski only. The "Enlightenment" article has not a single German title, nor the "Renaissance" (or "Bodin," for example) one in Italian. The Ronsard bibliography is not up-to-date, nor is the Carco without S. S. Weiner's good book of a few years ago. Moreover, the decision not to list editions, even definitive editions of collected works (perhaps a matter of economy dictated by the publishers), is unfortunate. On the other hand, almost all the bibliographies, given the fact that ordinarily they are limited to two or three items, are excellent. Not only on particular authors is this true, but equally so in the longer articles, such as in Clements' discriminating "Renaissance" list.

The inclusion of critics posed a difficult problem, and it may be that Braun succeeded well in distinguishing critic from scholar. But, to take an instance or two, not everyone will agree with his inclusion of Bédier, Lanson, and Thibaudet, and his exclusion of Peyre and Spitzer, or his saying aye to Hazard and nay to Baldensperger.

But the compiler is not a machine, and his betrayal of his own tastes, loves, and enthusiasms often enlivens the book. Braun writes with an ease and charm (in spite of a too-frequent use of "this Parisian," "this poet") that render the dictionary readable for long stretches; for this the user will be almost as grateful as the reviewer. His description of Rabelais' characters as "part-time giants" and of Pantagruel as a "genial sage" and his generally careful but vivid style largely remove the sting which compactness is almost always heir to.

Braun's idea of including an article on the influence of Aristotle is one of many examples of good judgment. His article on the French Academy is the best brief summary one could ask for, and most of his book-or-author pieces are on a high level of scholarly accuracy.

The tone of independence which Braun sets is maintained in the genre articles contributed by his collaborators. Space permits the mention of only a few: May's "Classicism" is of the highest order; Bédé's "Poetry" is superb; Bieber's article on "Resistance Literature" has the clear ring of authority; and in Alden's "Novel" it is a joy to see famous novels which are boring called boring, and unreadable books called unreadable, the manuals to the contrary notwithstanding. In George's fine, broad discussion of "Romanticism" one misses only a title or two from the anti-romantic criticism of the early twentieth century.

Surely the volume is not without mistakes or without signs of traditionalism. Thus Vial's statement that "Pascal was, historically, the first to have formulated a moderate theory of progress" is strangely out of joint in an otherwise solid and perceptive treatment of the Enlightenment. Braun's simple statement, in "Phèdre," that the play is based on Euripides' *Hippolytus* is curiously incomplete by comparison to the rest of the articles, and the "Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes," factual and humdrum and taking no account of the lively interplay between England and France (not to mention other literatures) in that Europe-wide phenomenon, is striking because it is not the performance which the rest of the volume leads us to expect.

This new *Dictionary*, duplicating nothing now available, will prove both useful and stimulating to seasoned scholars, teachers, graduate students, and novices in the field of French literature and should quickly become a vademecum on every level. And its author, should anyone hitherto have been unaware of his wide learning and fine judgment, must be counted in the foremost ranks of American students of French literature.

ABRAHAM C. KELLER

*University of Washington*

*Rómulo Gallegos: Vida y obra.* By LOWELL DUNHAM. Translated by GONZALO BARRIOS and RICARDO MONTILLA. México: Ediciones de Andrea, "Colección Studium," No. 15, 1957. Pp. 327. \$3.85.

This volume, a revision and translation of the author's unpublished doctoral dissertation ("Rómulo Gallegos: A Bibliographical Study," University of California at Los Angeles, June, 1955), fills the long-standing need for a thoroughly documented comprehensive study of the celebrated Venezuelan's life and work. Based upon a wealth of information assiduously gathered from questionnaires, private correspondence, personal conversations with Gallegos, members of his family, friends, and associates, as well as published materials, the book corrects and clarifies much of the inaccuracy, inconsistency, and vagueness that has characterized previously available data and consolidates scattered information that frequently has been difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. As indicated by the numerous footnotes in which appear "relatado" or "revelado" or "referido al autor por el señor Gallegos," Lowell Dunham's personal acquaintance with the novelist has enabled him to corroborate many of his findings and to offer valuable insights into Gallegos' life, work, and personality. Translators Barrios and Montilla, drawing upon their own long-time association with Gallegos, have added considerably to the value of these "Notas" with contributions of their own (pp. 217-18) and have not hesitated, in at least one major instance, to correct certain of Dunham's assumptions (p. 264) which, upon further consultation with the novelist, were rendered inadmissible (p. 285).

The *Vida y obra* has to its credit, moreover, some important "firsts" in Gallegos studies. Emphasizing their importance "porque allí se nos muestra el proceso de formación mental del futuro escritor de cuentos, dramaturgo, novelista, ensayista, líder político y educador . . ." (p. 138), Dunham presents for the first time in Chapter IV, "Los ensayos," a detailed discussion of the series of periodical articles which appeared in *La Alborada* and *El Cojo Ilustrado* during the years 1909-1912. In Chapter V, "Los cuentos," Dunham performs a similar service for the little-known short stories, including several which have never been reprinted in any collection. Notwithstanding the variety of subject and the unevenness of quality that stamp these early fictional efforts, Dunham stresses their importance as an indispensable conceptual and technical bridge to the novels.

Given the enormity of the project which Dunham has undertaken and the diligence with which he has carried it out, it is regrettable that he did not subject his study to a more thorough editing. For example, Chapter I, "La tierra, la gente y la época," could have been eliminated entirely since much of its content is repeated in Chapters II and III. In the chapters on the novels (VI, VII, VIII), many of the often-quoted critical commentaries (see in particular pp. 222-27) could also have been deleted. Chapter IX, "Los patrones," appears almost as an afterthought. Relegated to its pages is some highly pertinent material on background and literary influences which would have proved much more meaningful if incorporated into the body of the three preceding chapters. The analysis of certain of Gallegos' recurrent literary devices, which constitutes Dunham's most significant critical contribution, also should have been expanded and utilized to advantage in the discussion of each of the novels.

The book is not entirely free from major inaccuracies and misprints. For example, an incorrect and highly misleading statement is made on p. 138, which may be the product of a misinterpretation on the part of the translators: "Ulrich Leo, en su serie de artículos intitulada 'La invención de la novela'

[sic] atribuye gran importancia a las características esenciales de los ensayos que aparecen en obras como *Pobre negro* y más especialmente en *El forastero*; pero ni una vez menciona la labor inicial de Gallegos en *La Alborada*." The phrase "de los ensayos" leads us to believe that Leo is making a specific reference to the essays written by Gallegos, whereas in fact the critic is making a generic reference to the essay as a literary form and, apparently, at the time of writing (1943) was quite unaware of the existence of these early articles. In addition, the title of the article referred to above is "La invención en la novela," not "... de la novela."

On p. 277, the quotation from Gallegos' novel is given as "'¿Plan? ¡Plan!'" instead of "'¿Plan? ¡Pan!'" The full title of Gallegos' lecture should read "La pura mujer sobre la tierra," not "La mujer sobre la tierra" (footnote, pp. 249-50). In the bibliography (p. 317) Ulrich Leo's article is entitled "Un maestro en formación: sobre dos novelas cortas de Rómulo Gallegos," not simply "Sobre dos novelas cortas de Rómulo Gallegos." The information provided for the next item on that same page, "Sobre la misma tierra.—Apuntes al estilo de la novela-película," is also in error. The article cited was published in three parts; entirely omitted is mention of the first part which should have been listed as appearing in *Revista Nacional de Cultura*, Año VII (Mayo-Junio, 1945), No. 50, pp. 111-38; the second part is correctly located in *RNC*, Año VII (Julio-Agosto, 1945), No. 51.

Not least among the many assets of this book is its voluminous bibliography which has been carefully brought up to date. Regrettable, on the other hand, is the failure to include a thorough index to the materials gathered so profusely on every page. The inclusion of copies of the questionnaires that Lowell Dunham submitted to Rómulo Gallegos would have proved of considerable help to scholars in evaluating the writer's responses.

GLORIA ALEDORT LEVINE

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*Voci romanesche: Aggiunte e commenti al vocabolario romanesco Chiappini-Rolandi.* By PIETRO BELLONI and HANS NILSSON-EHLE. Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, Skrifter utgivna av Vetenskaps Societeten, Lund, No. 50, 1957. Pp. xiii + 129. Kr. 15.-.

In the field of Italian dialectology, one of the most varied in the world, the speech of the city of Rome stands out not so much by reason of phonological or grammatical divergence from the standard language as because of the racy, spicy, picturesque character of its vocabulary, word combinations, and special expressions.

To a native Roman like this reviewer, *Voci romanesche* is doubly welcome: first, because it is a nostalgic reminder of the real home tongue with which I grew up during the first seven years of my life, and into which I still occasionally lapse with my mother, a native of Orvieto brought to Rome when she was one year old; second, because it rounds out the excellent *Vocabolario romanesco* of F. Chiappini (with U. Rolandi's additions and Bruno Migliorini's careful editing), which was published in 1945 and of which so few copies are available in this country.

Belloni and Nilsson-Ehle have done a splendid job. After a five-page outline of the phonetics and grammar of the dialect, they go on to list and define nearly 1,500 words and locutions which the earlier work neglected in whole or in part.

The definitions are not only precise, but thoroughly documented from dialectal literature. It is indicative of the painstaking nature of the work of the authors that this reviewer, with his own and his mother's thorough grounding in the dialect, can find only some two dozen entries to comment upon.

(A) *rubbagalline* (literally "chicken-thief"), described in both works as applied to one who wears a stovepipe hat, is also occasionally used of one whose garb is in any way affected, outlandish, or unconventional. *Bensinaro* is omitted in the present work; Chiappini lists it for a saloonkeeper who sells adulterated wine. I have also heard it used as the exact equivalent of the American slang "boozehound." *Ahò!*, omitted in both works, is often used as an exclamation of resentment or defiance. Under the uses of *accenne* ("to light") we miss in both works the expressive *accenne un moccolo* ("to light a candle") in the sense of "to utter a cuss-word."

*Accondito* is given with this spelling, which impresses me as what the Romans would call *porcivile* (another expression that might be brought in; a combination of *porco* and *civile*, it means "over-affected"). We should prefer *acconito*, in accordance with the Roman phonetic "law" that *-nd-* turns to *-nn-*, as in ancient Oscan (the same applies to *sfontendo*, p. 25, even if it is quoted from *Rugantino*).

Under *cammera* we find *locanda* and a *sopraffitto*, but not a *subbaffitto*, which is what we have always heard for a rented room in a rented apartment. The authors themselves have had a curious lapse into the Roman dialect when, on p. 25, they write in *cui si riferisce* for *riferisce*. Under *cavallo*, we miss the time-honored expression *li dolori li fa pijà a li cavalli* ("he lets the horses take the pains"), said of one who is indifferent or negligent. Under *cicio*, we find *cicia fredda*, but not *cicia mecia*, for a girl with too many frills or scruples.

Under *impaparacchiato* the authors have listed the variant *spaperacchiato* ("comfortably seated"), but not *spaperanzato*, which is more colorful, bringing in the idea of *panza*. Neither work lists *ingozzà* in the sense of "to put up with, endure patiently." *Lavativo* (literally "enema") is not merely *persona antipatica* or gossip, but what Americans describe as "a pain in the neck."

We should prefer *mal matrone* to *mal madrone*. We also miss two expressive phrases: *Bona notte Gesù che l'olio è caro e più antico del Tantum Ergo*, as well as *annà a pippa*, "to suit perfectly." *Picchio* and *picchia* are not only tops, children, and girls, but also favorite names for cats. In Belloni's *trasteverino* he has always heard *li supprì* for rice croquettes; in mine, they are feminine. His locution *Né de Venere né de Marte, nun se sposa, nun se parte, nun se mette mano a l'arte* I have heard with the variant *nun se dà principio a l'arte*. *Gioielli* for "beans" is used, but only in derisive imitation of Tuscans, who seem to have brought that locution to Rome.

If the authors wish to dispute any of these remarks, it will only prove what linguists well know: that a dialect changes from decade to decade, from *rione* to *rione*, and even from person to person.

MARIO A. PEI

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*Die deutsche Sprache im Ausland.* By FRANZ THIERFELDER. Hamburg, 1956-1957. I, 196; II, 402. DM 14.80; DM 40.-.

The distinguished author of *Die deutsche Sprache im Ausland* is the general secretary of the Institute for "Auslandsbeziehungen" at Stuttgart and is, therefore, particularly well qualified to write about the status of the German language

in foreign lands. His two volumes have no "soul-catching" intentions; on the contrary, he assesses objectively the pros and cons of the value of German.

The first volume deals with the importance and characteristic features of the German language. Its disadvantages can be revealed in those grotesquely long sentences which, in England, are not infrequently called "Professorendeutsch." Moreover, in comparison with Italian, for example, German has for Southern ears an overpowering richness of consonants. Antoine Rivarol refers to German as "trop rich et trop dur." In this criticism there is great praise, though perhaps unintentionally implied. And no one will take seriously Voltaire's cynicism when he wants the Germans to have more intelligence and fewer consonants! The advantages which the German language offers to foreigners are worth noting; e.g., its unique adaptability for translation (Homer, Dante, Shakespeare), its geographical distribution, its purely scientific and cultural values, its technical achievements, its great poetry, and so on.

The German language is, according to Thierfelder's statistical evidence, the fifth largest world-language. Roughly 450 million people speak Chinese, 250 million English (50 million in Europe and 200 million in America, etc.), 160 million Hindu, 140 million Russian, and 100 million German. It is, therefore, not unjust if the author expresses surprise that German is unfortunately often ignored as a medium of communication at international congresses and such gatherings. The creation of an artificial language (such as "Esperanto") cannot solve the problem of our Babel of about 3,000 languages in the world. "Esperanto" is based entirely on the Indo-European language structure and thus could not help the Japanese or the Chinese. Moreover, any artificial world-language, if accepted by nations, would soon be divided into a multitude of colloquial dialects and would again become useless as a world-language. Franz Thierfelder advocates the full cultivation of the three great European languages—English, French, German—each being a world-language in its own right, each providing a valuable medium in the exchange of international discourse.

By way of comparison between our age of mass communication and the old modes of communication, the author mentions Herodotus' report about a slave into whose shaven skull a message was scratched so that this "letter" could be safely delivered to the Great King as soon as the hair had grown back again. Today radio and television are transforming our means of communication rapidly and drastically, and signs of the disintegration of our national languages are to be noted in many areas.

The massive second volume surveys the fascinating field of the international expansion of German, not only in Europe but also in Australia, Africa, Asia, Ibero-America, and Anglo-America. The careful method applied here by the eminent author can be seen, for instance, in the section about Great Britain. In the introductory chapter he outlines the peculiar development of English as a world-language; then he proceeds to detailed analyses of German as an academic subject in British universities, statistics about the staffs in German departments in British universities, and a discussion of German language instruction (including examinations) in the school curriculum. He mentions the German societies in England and concludes with a description of the position of German books in libraries. He also offers statistics about the "deutsch-sprachliche Ausländer."

In the section about the United States, the statistics (p. 383) bring to light a deplorable, if not shocking, negligence of the German language in the educational system. In this connection, Thierfelder emphasizes the value of the language both for cultural (literature, music, and so on) and for scientific matters.

The two volumes are the fruit of detailed research and rich experience in a world of conflict and change. We can warmly recommend the work to all readers.

A. CLOSS

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*Höfische Tischzuchten.* Herausgegeben von THOMAS PERRY THORNTON. Berlin/Bielefeld/München: Erich Schmidt Verlag, Texte des späten Mittelalters, Heft 4, 1957. Pp. 76. DM 5.80.

*Grobianische Tischzuchten.* Herausgegeben von THOMAS PERRY THORNTON. Berlin/Bielefeld/München: Erich Schmidt Verlag, Texte des späten Mittelalters, Heft 5, 1957. Pp. 71. DM 5.80.

*Bonaventura "De Triplici Via" in altschwäbischer Übertragung.* Herausgegeben von KURT RUH. Berlin/Bielefeld/München: Erich Schmidt Verlag, Texte des späten Mittelalters, Heft 6, 1957. Pp. 64. DM 5.20.

The two *Tischzuchten* volumes, based upon preliminary work done by the late Arno Schirokauer, present selections ranging from the beginning of the twelfth century through to the second half of the sixteenth century. Although not all the twenty-two assorted sources and authors provide passages and samples of equal interest, the two volumes do make conveniently available collections that, as the introduction to Heft 4 points out, show "einen Lesestoff, der die Vorstellungswelt des Volkes stark beeinflusste und formte."

In the first volume are included selections from Petrus Alphonsus' *Disciplina Clericalis*, *Facetus* (Latin and German), *Thesmophagia* (fourteen pages, the longest selection in the volume), five lines from Wolfram's *Parzival*, Thomasin von Zirclaere's *Wälscher Gast*, the *Tischzucht* by Tannhäuser, and a selection from the *Liederbuch der Clara Hätzlerin*. Except for the clear and concise notes on the sources for the selections, no critical apparatus or explanatory notes are provided.

The *Grobianische Tischzuchten* volume (Heft 5) begins the texts with a selection from Wittenweiler's *Ring* and includes Chapter 110 of Sebastian Brant's *Narrenschiff*, a selection from Thomas Murner's *Schelmensunft*, three pieces by Hans Sachs, and, of course, several selections from F. Dedekind-K. Scheit, *Grobianus*. These are in addition to other assorted pieces, including the Low German version of the *Grobianus Tischzucht* of 1538 and a Latin sample of the genre, *Speculum Mensae*. As in the first volume, there are concise notes on the sources, but no critical apparatus or explanatory notes.

Short introductions precede both *Tischzuchten* volumes and make us aware of the historical development of the genre and its usefulness in helping to complete our picture of medieval life and letters. It is regrettable that the editor did not include explanations for the many interesting words and phrases that occur throughout, particularly in the Low German selections. The texts seem to have been meticulously compared with earlier editions (or manuscripts), and the exceptionally few and minor typographical errors in no way detract from the usefulness or attractiveness of the two volumes.

Kurt Ruh, author of *Bonaventura deutsch: Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Franziskanermystik und -scholastik* (Bern, 1956), has produced a useful critical edition of Bonaventura's *De triplici via* (alias *Incendium amoris*) in Old Swabian translation. Of all the mystical-ascetic works by Bonaventura (1221-1274) *De*

*triplici via* had the widest medieval distribution, achieving almost three hundred manuscripts, as well as four printed versions, by the year 1500.

The Old Swabian translation exists in five manuscripts, and Ruh has provided an excellent apparatus to trace their history and relationships. The text here presented is based on the best possible reading, and the editor has provided all the variant readings of the other Old Swabian manuscripts in the notes. In addition to text and variant reading notes, there is a glossary that is indeed welcome. The entries were chosen primarily for German-Latin correspondences, and the glossary aims particularly to clarify the scholastic-mystic vocabulary. Words not in Lexer are so identified, as are words not in Diefenbach's *Glossarium Latino-Germanicum*.

Four short introductory chapters—"Die Überlieferung," "Die Herkunft des Originals (O)," "Die Textgestaltung," and "Würdigung"—greatly increase the value of the volume for students and scholars. *De triplici via* affords another facet of those mystic-ascetic philosophical works which help form our image of Germany at the waning of the Middle Ages.

As other reviewers of volumes in this new series have noted, the editors and publishers are to be congratulated upon the publication of important and well-edited texts in a previously neglected field.

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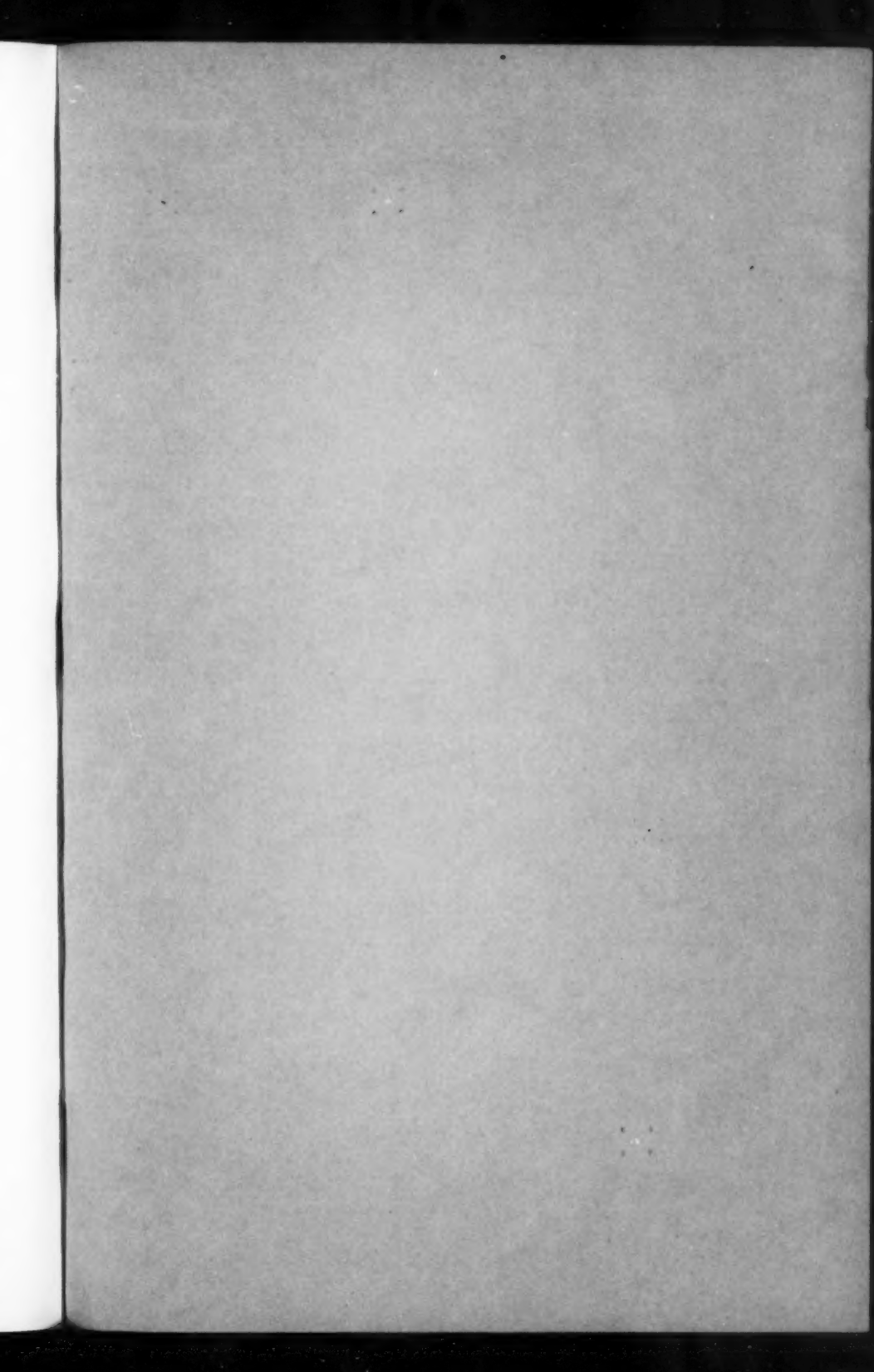
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